

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF
THE MEANING AND FUNCTION OF GUILT
IN CURRENT PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORY AND
CONTEMPORARY FORMULATIONS OF PREACHING

by

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INTRODUCTION

An investigation into the meaning and function of guilt is an inquiry into the meaning and function of human existence. Guilt is present in all human behavior and its forms and causes are as varied as life itself. It has been suggested that guilt is without a doubt one of the major contributors to the aggression and hostility from which man's worst problems spring--war, criminality, marital disruptions, suicidal behavior, and much of man's illness.¹

This observation is underscored by the fact that the International Conference on Mental Health held in London in 1948 took as their theme one word, "Guilt." Ernest Jones, reporting at this conference said,

The trouble from which the world suffers at present can, in my opinion, very largely be traced to the manifold attempts to deal with the inner sense of guiltiness, and therefore, any contribution that will illuminate this particular problem will be of greatest value.²

The dynamics of guilt are not only a general problem for man, but it becomes very specific as a personal experience.

¹Edward Stein, "An Analysis of the Theory of Guilt Formation in the Personality and Some Implications for Christian Thought" (Unpublished dissertation Ph.D., University of Southern California, 1953), p.2.

²Ernest Jones, M.D. in International Conference on Medical Psychotherapy, Proceedings (New York: Columbia University Press, 1948), p.26.

Any person who has ever had a goal which he has not reached or personal integrity which he has not honored or opportunities which he has ignored may have the haunting human experience of guilt. In general we may say that "Guilt comes as a consequence of the failure to actualize either the potentials or the expectations of personality development."³ And, since to be human is to have potentials and expectations, to be human is also to experience some form of guilt.

However, guilt becomes a special problem for the minister. It is difficult for a parish minister to pass a day in his work when he does not encounter this problem in human behavior. People often seek the minister's help because of a sense of guilt feelings. Many others avoid him for the same reason. His very existence speaks of a need for man to relate to God-to actualize his potential. In fact, Father White has said, that without a sense of guilt, "the Christian faith and practice, the whole gospel message of salvation and the rites of the Church, would be completely meaningless."⁴

³Charles Barnes, "Some Aspects of Guilt Related to the Preaching of Protestant Ministers" (Unpublished dissertation Ph.D., Boston University School of Theology, 1962), p.2.

⁴Victor White, O.P., "Guilt: Theological and Psychological," in Philip Mairet Christian Essays in Psychiatry, (New York: Philosophical Library, 1965), p.161.

While the minister accepts the responsibility to work with man in his guiltiness, he also recognizes the complexity of the problem. He soon realizes that all guilt is not the same. Some people suffer from deep depressions because of imagined wrongs which they have committed. It is not unusual in mental hospitals to talk with patients who feel that their guilt is so great that nothing can help them. The minister understands that for this person a simple word of forgiveness or rite of the church is not enough. It may be this type of problem that causes Sherrill to say,

The habits of thought in much theology have grown so remote from felt reality as to make it seem now almost a heresy to turn theology toward guilt as it is actually experienced in modern life. And as for the guilty themselves, hopeless or defiant, or hostile, they have learned the bitterest lesson which modern Christianity teaches, namely, that it has a remarkable metaphysical theory of redemption which in practice, in the hands of many of its servants, cannot reach down into the recesses of the human soul and set that soul free from guilt.⁵

At the same time that indictments are made concerning the weakness of Christian doctrine as a therapy for guilt feelings, the minister finds himself placed more and more in a counseling role within the church. In this relationship he is often taught not to probe, interpret, evaluate, lead or judge the client.

⁵Lewis Sherrill, Guilt and Redemption, (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1945), p.14.

He is to understand, reflect and help to establish rapport through empathy. He realizes that the client himself must learn to help himself in his own problem.

It may be that the minister as a counselor finds himself following another system of thought which says that the guilt the patient is feeling is really coming from a restrictive superego which developed as a result of early infantile wishes and struggles with his parents. The patient has now projected these thoughts upon his new parent figure--God. Perhaps here the minister-counselor will need to help the patient through dreams and other materials of the unconscious to discover the true nature of these guilt feelings which in all likelihood will reveal some repressed sexual ambivalence. The parish minister now begins to experience guilt feelings of his own over the fact that he is not prepared academically or in terms of his own self growth to deal with these involved problems.

The result of this tension is to force the minister into a dichotomy of roles. He is the exponent of Paul and Wesley in his preaching and the supporter of Rogers and Freud in his counseling. Stein rightly observes that the minister "cannot forever continue to play the dichotomous role of preacher on Sunday and counselor on weekdays with an underlying feeling of guilt on his own part over the fact that the twain never seem to meet."⁶

⁶Stein, op.cit., p.125.

A minister-counselor who is deeply engrossed in helping people with their debilitating guilt feelings can tend to regard preaching in general as a contributor toward the problem and not an alleviator of it. He sees people coming into his study with all kinds of fears and expressions of guilt which seem to stem from a judgmental theology or condemnatory sermons. It is easy for him to question with Bartlett, "The more we understand the dynamics of personal relationships, the more some have raised the question whether preaching is an asset or a liability."⁷

However, the minister is not only a counselor, but he is also a proclaimer of the gospel. He may agree with the observation that,

There has been too much preoccupation with the preaching of moralistic sermons which are condemnatory and critical and from which the average person is able to obtain little more than an increase of guilt and inferiority feelings. The help a troubled person needs so badly cannot come from such sermons.⁸

But this does not help him find the right perspective on the meaning and function of guilt in his own preaching. After all, the Gospel does make some claims about forgiveness, love and grace. He often wonders how these concepts are reconciled with the part of the kerygma that calls for judgment and obedience. He questions how he might apply

⁷Gene Bartlett, "The Preaching and Pastoral Roles", Pastoral Psychology, II (March 1952), p.21.

⁸Ernest Bruder, Ministering To Deeply Troubled People, (Englewood Cliffs, N.J. Prentice Hall, 1963), p.106.

the insights which he has found in his psychological studies with what he reads concerning the formulations of preaching. And, the focal point of this conflict is in the area of the meaning of guilt. As McKenzie observed,

Whereas the task of the psychotherapist is to reduce the intolerance of the Super-ego, that is the intensity of guilt feelings, the more evangelical theologians and preachers aim to produce the 'conviction of sin' by stimulating guilt feelings.⁹

It is exactly at this point where "psychotherapy and Christian pastoral care come very close together, but where at the same time the disagreement between these two disciplines emerges most clearly."¹⁰ As Overstreet has observed, "No problem has so blocked an understanding between religion and psychology as the problem of guilt and sin."¹¹

Because of the problem between these two indispensable disciplines of the ministry, several recent studies have been made with regard to the meaning of guilt in Christian theology and experience.

⁹John McKenzie, Guilt: Its Meaning and Significance (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), p.124.

¹⁰Adolph Koberle, "The Problem of Guilt," Pastoral Psychology, VIII (December, 1957), 33.

¹¹Bonaro W. Overstreet, "Guilt Feelings Creative and Uncreative," Pastoral Psychology, VI (May, 1955), 19.

In 1945 Sherrill¹² attempted to apply aspects of the Christian faith to the problem of guilt. Along this same line, but more recently, Tournier¹³ has offered us some help in distinguishing between true and false guilt feelings, plus some suggestions on the meaning of guilt in the Christian faith. McKenzie¹⁴ gives an excellent survey of the meaning of guilt for law, ethics and religion. He is especially helpful in his discussion of the origin of guilt and its dissipation.

More recent doctoral dissertations in this area have presented some interesting comparisons and analyses. Lord¹⁵ has presented us with a study of association of the Christian faith with ideas of guilt and punishment in the lives of people suffering from deep lying guilt. Norden¹⁶ of Harvard University has a long, two volume, study of the function of guilt and its implications for education.

¹²Sherrill, op.cit.

¹³Paul Tournier, Guilt and Grace, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1962).

¹⁴McKenzie, op.cit.

¹⁵Lemuel Lord, "The Association of Ideas of the Christian Faith with Ideas of Guilt and Punishment in the Lives of People Suffering From Deep Lying Guilt" (Unpublished dissertation Th.D., Boston University School of Theology, 1941).

¹⁶Irmgard Norden, "Guilt Feelings: A Systematic Discussion of Their Function and Their Implications For Education" (Unpublished dissertation Ph.D., Harvard University, 1949).

Perlman¹⁷ conducted an experiment to help understand the nature of anxiety through a clearer definition of guilt and shame.

DeYoung¹⁸ has done a rather thorough job of comparing the existential theology of Kierkegaard and Tillich with the dynamic psychology of Freud and Sullivan. Jacobson's¹⁹ study was also comparative, but this time Sullivan and Brunner's writing on guilt and forgiveness were studied and contrasted. Edward Stein²⁰ has done a commendable job of relating the theory of guilt formation in personality to certain aspects of Christian thought. His solution to the problem of guilt through insight and the application of the principle of agape has been helpful. Falcone,²¹ a Catholic

¹⁷Melvin Perlman, "Guilt and Shame: An Experimental Approach to the Study of Anxiety" (Unpublished dissertation Ph. D., University of Chicago, 1953).

¹⁸Quintin DeYoung, "A Study of Contemporary Christian Existential Theology (Kierkegaard and Tillich) and Modern Dynamic Psychology (Freud and Sullivan) Concerning Guilt Feelings" (Unpublished dissertation Ph.D., University of Southern California, 1959).

¹⁹Sverre T. Jacobson, "The Interpersonalism of Guilt and Forgiveness in the Writings of Harry Stack Sullivan and Emil Brunner" (Unpublished dissertation Th.D., Princeton Theological Seminary, 1959).

²⁰Stein, op. cit.

²¹John Falcone, "A Study of the Theological and Psychiatric Aspects of Guilt" (Unpublished dissertation S. T. L., St. Mary's University, 1961).

scholar from St. Mary's University, has contributed to the literature by studying the distinctions between theological and psychological aspects of this problem.

The only study thus far that has touched directly on the problem of preaching is the one by Charles Barnes²² of Boston University School of Theology. Barnes has studied the problem of guilt as relating to certain Protestant ministers. Here he discovered how the minister himself felt guilty for not living up to the expectations which he had for himself and which he felt the congregation also had. The minister then works out his guilt feelings by creating guilt in the congregation through preaching about idealistic standards for Christian conduct.

However, at present the minister-counselor -preacher is still faced with the problem of how to relate the meaning of guilt to his congregation in a way that will be healthy for them and still remain faithful to what he conceives to be his task as a minister.

The following questions with regard to this problem continue to arise:

In what way does preaching help to solve the guilt problem and in what ways does it contribute to the problem?

To what extent is it the obligation of the sermon to make men aware of their contentions and face realistic self

²²Barnes, op. cit.

appraisal--even when this appraisal will generate guilt feelings?

Is the creation of guilt feelings through the preaching of judgment a necessary part of the proclamation of the gospel?

What are the various kinds and functions of guilt?

In what way can contemporary preaching benefit from an application of the psychological principles of guilt to its formulations?

What are the best therapeutic methods for handling guilt?

What is the difference between a psychological and a theological formulation of guilt?

What does a man like Forsyth mean when he says that "Christ destroys our guilt?"

Or as Bartlett asks, "Can one preach wholesale the absolutes in moral standards without contributing to unhealthy guilt feelings and self accusations?"²³

Although the previous questions will not be treated systematically, they will be used as a guide as an attempt is made in this study to clarify the area of confusion which presently exists concerning the meaning and function of guilt in preaching. We hope as a result of this study to make

²³Bartlett, op. cit., p. 23.

some positive suggestions concerning a more meaningful communication of the Gospel.

This research is divided into three areas of investigation. The first focuses on contemporary literature in the field of preaching. Here we are attempting to discover exactly what preachers are saying concerning their understanding of the function of guilt in preaching.

The second area of emphasis is an investigation of the current psychological literature concerning the meaning and function of guilt in human behavior. We are discovering the various psychological interpretations of this aspect of man's existence along with its many functions and definitions. The purpose of this investigation is to clarify exactly what some psychologists means when they talk about guilt and guilt feelings.

The third division of inquiry re-examines certain biblical themes and concepts which might be affected by the other research. Such themes as judgment, grace and responsibility are looked at from the point of view of both the recent studies concerning guilt and the contemporary formulations of preaching.

The above investigation has been outlined under the three divisions of the origin, interpretation and resolution of guilt. In each division both the preaching and psychological concepts are examined, synthesized and critically applied to the communication of the Gospel.

The literature used in the field of preaching is contemporary in appeal and date. Some of the literature consists of sermons while other books are those written for the preacher with regard to the nature and meaning of preaching. In some cases where the preacher is also a theologian, such as with Tillich or Barth, we have used only his sermons as a point of analysis.

CHAPTER I

THE ORIGIN OF GUILT

FORMULATIONS OF PREACHING

The first section of this study is concerned with what preachers are saying about the meaning of guilt in preaching. We hope to help clarify the confusion which surrounds this area of investigation by looking at what actually is being said about guilt in contemporary formulations of preaching. The first part of our inquiry will be concerned with what preaching says about the origin of man's guilt. Guilt is Assumed.

This concept indicates that man is guilty right now, but the origin of this guilt is either not important or simply accepted as part of man's nature. That is, many of the men in preaching begin with the reality that man is guilty and that he knows it. These men do not see a need to discuss the idea as to why he is guilty—they simply begin with the fact that man is guilty and speak to him in this condition.

For a writer like Farmer, the central thrust in preaching is an I-thou relationship between God and man. He suggest that,

If we are to see the reason why preaching is essential to the saving purpose of God, is part of the divine saving activity itself, we must set it in the context of this whole world of the personal and

of the facts and laws by which it is constituted.¹

This "divine saving activity" is part of the way God speaks to man. God comes to man and encounters him as a person. It is through this encounter that redeemed personal relationships are established. Preaching, therefore, tells man something. But, more than that, preaching is "God actively probing me, challenging my will, calling on me for decision, offering me His succour, through the only medium which the nature of His purpose permits Him to use, the medium of a personal relationship."²

Farmer, therefore, does not need to discuss the "origin" of man's need or of his guilt. He believes that God begins where man is now. Another preacher who, in a somewhat different way, is saying the same thing is Tillich. Even though Tillich says more about the dynamics of man's guilt in his relationship to God, he nevertheless, still begins where man is and does not concern himself about the origin of man's guilt. Tillich observes that we do not like to use old fashioned words like "sin" and "punishment", but he still recognizes that man experiences personal and corporate guilt. He states that no life is able to overcome finiteness, sin and tragedy. He further says, "The illusions of our period have been that modern civilization can conquer

¹Herbert Farmer, The Servant Of The Word (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1942), p. 26.

²Ibid., p. 27.

them, and that we can achieve security in our own existence."³

For Tillich, finiteness, anxiety and guilt are all part of our very human existence. The origin of these experiences appears to be relatively unimportant. The important part is that we experience life now.

Another homiletician who is concerned with man's present condition is Jones. He stresses the preacher's responsibility to speak to man who is "crushed beneath the burden of guilt and the wages of sin."⁴ The preacher is to use all of his skill to persuade men to embrace the Gospel. He warns that, "No person should undertake to preach the gospel unless he believes in men as potential sons of God, in the possibility of their redemption, and in the successful outcome of the human enterprise."⁵

Jones therefore stresses the appeal which is to be made to man who is sick, lost, and guilty. He does not spend time discussing why man is guilty or how this all began.

We have thus far looked at one group of preachers who

³Paul Tillich, The Shaking Of The Foundations (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948), p. 22.

⁴Ilion Jones, Principles and Practice of Preaching (New York: Abingdon Press, 1946), p. 45.

⁵Ibid.

by their omission of a discussion on the subject, look upon the origin of guilt as secondary. They accept the human situation as it is and stress the responsibility of man to respond to the invitation of God for help in his guilty condition. The preacher speaks to what is now happening in man's present existence. The hidden assumption of this group is that one can recover from guilt without knowing its origin.

Guilt is Moral Disobedience.

This particular concept stresses the fact that man is guilty and that the origin of his guilt is disobedience before God. Man has deliberately chosen for himself that which is morally wrong or has decided to ignore the prohibition of God.

A man like Haselden sees the wrath of God sweeping through man's earthly affairs. The job of the true preacher is to sound a note of warning. He states,

But if there is not in the sermon a warning about hell or hell's equivalent, it is false to the people, to the realities of the human situation, to itself and the God who says to his messengers, "If I say to the wicked, 'You shall surely die,' and you give him no warning, nor speak to warn the wicked from his wicked way, in order to save his life, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at your hand." (Ezek. 3:18)⁶

But what has made man so "wicked." What is the

⁶Kyle Haselden, The Urgency of Preaching (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), p. 44.

origin of his guilt? Haselden gives us his answer in the following statement:

It is not God but the devil who says to man-says it to him even in his Eden-"You will not die". If the minister would speak for God rather than for the devil, he will put into his preaching-stated or implied-the warning of God's threat against the insolently disobedient child.⁷

Man's guilt has its origin in the fact that he is an "insolently disobedient child." The idea that the origin of man's guilt stems from his disobedience is a prominent one among preachers. Pearson reminds us of different kinds of sins which stem from disobedience. Some sins he says are open, gross and easily discernible. These are "lying, cheating, stealing, robbery, adultery, murder."⁸ However, the more serious sins are of another kind. "They rise from the fact that Christians do not always love their enemies, that they do not always seek God's kingdom first, that they do not always turn the other cheek, go the second mile, take up their crosses, or offer up their lives for Christ's sake."⁹

Pearson does suggest that the doctrine of original sin, man's first disobedience, may account for the fact that

⁷Ibid., p.48.

⁸Roy Pearson, The Ministry of Preaching (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959), p.49.

⁹Ibid.

people will inevitably sin; it is still true, however, that their guilt comes from their present disobedience.

When Fosdick discusses man's guilt in his famous sermon on forgiveness, he stresses man's active will which chooses evil as the cause of his guilt, Man is always involving himself in sins of the flesh, sins of temper, sins of social attitude, sins of neglect. He also says,

Nor should any one try to escape his share in the need of forgiveness until he has added to the list sins of neglect. It is not alone the things we do; it is the things we leave undone that haunt us--the letters we did not write, the words we did not speak, the opportunity we did not take.¹⁰

Our guilt is, therefore, ever before us because of disobedience and our choosing that which is morally wrong or neglecting that which is morally right.

Another preacher who sees the origin of the guilt problem as moral disobedience is Donald Soper. Soper is bothered by the problem that although this is the origin of man's guilt, it appears that contemporary man does not acknowledge his guilt before God. However, the way Soper goes about trying to bring around a 'conviction of sin' helps us to understand what he perceives to be the origin of man's problem. He suggests that you address the hardened church goer as follows:

¹⁰Harry Fosdick, Riverside Sermons (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1958), p. 293.

If you will not be ashamed of yourself because of your personal delinquencies then be ashamed of the fact that you belong to a community which enjoys prosperity while so many of your fellows live in poverty and squalor. If you will not accept your own personal responsibility for the evil, shall we say, of intemperance, then will you at least look at the ravages of alcoholism and will you at least look at the effects that are produced upon little children.¹¹

Since Soper feels that any personal sense of guilt has almost disappeared, he believes it has to be reborn by stirring up the roots of man's guilt before God. He feels that this sense of guilt is reborn when "men have battled sincerely with their own ideals and have found their intentions have let them down, when men have confronted moral objectives, and have found they haven't the power or the consistency to reach them"¹² The origin of man's guilt therefore stems from his "personal delinquencies"-his moral disobedience.

Grady Davis is best known for his book, Design For Preaching, and in it he has a great deal to say about the condition of man and how important it is to recognize man's sickness. He warn us that:

Deadly danger lurks in the superficial diagnosis of human ills and in the nostrums dispensed for their alleviation across the counters of popular religion and psychology. If there is nothing deeply and incorrigible

¹¹Donald Soper, The Advocacy of the Gospel (New York: Abingdon Press, 1961), p. 96.

¹²Ibid., p. 97.

wrong with people, redemption by the cross and resurrection is dramatic nonsense.¹³

When we search to discover the origin of this sickness we find Davis describing it as a kind of delinquency. He reminds us that man can be worse than a beast because he can be infinitely more than a beast. He says, "Human delinquency is tragic only because the human being is a child of God even in his delinquency."¹⁴

According to Davis, man has amazing power to make of his life what he wants. The fact that he most often chooses to dissipate his life in meaningless living is a great tragedy because of man's potential. The origin of man's guilt is therefore centered in his personal choice of moral disobedience.

A man who has begun to receive renewed attention in our time is P. T. Forsyth. Forsyth has been known from some time as a New Testament scholar and in 1907 wrote his lectures on preaching entitled, Positive Preaching and the Modern Mind. Although Forsyth speaks mainly to the problem of relevant communication of the Gospel, he does give us some clues as to what he believes to be the origin of man's guilt.

Forsyth reminds us that all theology and faith must begin in the holiness of God. God is fundamentally affected

¹³Grady Davis, Design For Preaching (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1958), p. 231.

¹⁴Ibid.

by sin. The reason man suffers today is due to the fact that he has scorned the holiness and love of God. He says that man "has a guilt in proportion to the holy love it scorns. The greater the love the greater the guilt."¹⁵

He tells us that the appeal of the evangelical, therefore, is to the actual conscience of the race, to the conscience taken as we find it, to the conscience sinful and redeemed, the conscience struck into despair, horrified with the world's moral tragedy, and plucked into salvation by God's and man's last moral crisis in the cross. Man's conscience has been sensitized by his holy disobedience and ingratitude. This conscience can be appealed to and will respond because it knows itself to be guilty. This conscience may be conditioned psychologically by men and it may in many ways be affected by environmental influences, but it is never a product of heredity or environment. The conscience is still free to respond to the moral demands of the cross. Man is therefore aware of the fact that the origin of his guilt is disobedience.

When James Pike talks about the origin of man's guilt he indicates that it consists in man's inability to live up to certain moral standards. He does not see it in the same way as a man like Soper, but he nevertheless still recognizes that the problem with man is that he lacks what is

¹⁵P.T. Forsyth, Positive Preaching and The Modern Mind (London: Independent Press, 1907), p. 252.

necessary to perform what he knows to be good and true. He says it this way:

The source of guilt feelings is the gap between the "is" and the "ought." Since the "is" generally falls short of the "ought", the usual practice is to pull the "ought" down to match the "is", so that we can feel comfortable with ourselves.¹⁶

Pike then begins to describe how man rationalizes with himself by saying, "I'm as good as the next fellow," or "I'm a good fellow-I pay my taxes, mend my fences, don't kick my neighbor's dog, don't butt into other people's business, don't talk religion" etc. Perhaps he might even excuse himself by saying, "My analyst tells me that because when I was twelve years old my mother glared at me, I had a traumatic experience: that's why I act the way I act."¹⁷ Pike's response to this is that man by using a set of mediocre ethics is saying, "we don't feel the need of redemption because we don't feel guilty."¹⁸

Regardless of how man tries to ignore, rationalize, or deny his involvement with life and its moral demands, Pike sees him as guilty and the origin of his guilt as moral disobedience and indifference.

We have just looked at a group of homilists who see the origin of man's guilt in his choosing the wrong when he knows the right. These preachers believe that man is

¹⁶James Pike, A New Look At Preaching (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1961), p. 39.

¹⁷Ibid., p.40. ¹⁸Ibid.

guilty because of these acts, regardless of how man may try to excuse himself, and that he either suffers from a bad conscience or his conscience can be quickened when reminded of these acts.

Guilt Is Idolatry.

We now turn to men who see the origin of guilt as some form of idolatry. This idolatry consists in worshipping something other than the true God. It may be the idolatry of self-sufficiency or exalting oneself to the place of a God. This idolatry may be the worship of things or achievements more than the creator. The result of this idolatry is a sense of guilt and estrangement.

The men who discuss this aspect of man's guilt recognize man's lostness in the society in which he now lives. They are students of the current literature which man reads and are aware of the manifold manifestations of man's guilt. These manifestations may take many forms and induce many kinds of illnesses, but the origin of this guilt and confusion is due to the fact that man is no longer worshipping the God who made him but has created other gods after his own likeness. Nevertheless, these men argue that man's guilt itself is a testimony to the reality of both a moral order and a personal God. Bishop Kennedy states,

Who are people trying to please when obviously they are not trying to please themselves or other people?
To say it is merely a principle does not at all explain

the sense of personal guilt they feel when they fail.¹⁹

If Kennedy were asked why men feel so frustrated and frightened, he would reply, "It is owing finally to having given their real devotion to an idol instead of to God."²⁰

The idolatry which Bartlett discusses is that of self-sufficiency. He states,

Many counselors seem to accept the view once widely heard that one's religion often is guilt producing because it makes a man try to live up to impossible moral standards which he believes God imposes. But there is serious question whether this really is the main source of anxiety in our culture. Far more common, it seems to me, is the guilt which comes from the belief that one ought to be self-sufficient, and the repeated discovery that he is not, in spite of his best efforts.²¹

The fact that man believes the myth of self-sufficiency makes him vulnerable and guilt ridden. The origin of his guilt is not that he has chosen the wrong in the face of the right, but that he has accepted for himself an impossible standard. He is doomed to failure. If man is to be helped, the premise upon which he has based his life must be re-examined.

George Buttrick likewise sees man's guilt as the result of a form of idolatry. This idolatry comes about when

¹⁹Gerald Kennedy, His Word Through Preaching (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1947), p. 134.

²⁰Ibid., p. 154.

²¹Gene Bartlett, The Audacity of Preaching (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1962), p. 91.

man wills his own self-esteem. He believes that every man lives under the conviction that he has abused his own freedom. He likes to quote Dr. Samuel Johnson who said, "Every man knows his own sins."²²

In a sermon entitled, "Expiation", Buttrick uses Camus' The Fall as a means of discussing the origin of man's sin and guilt. Here Buttrick points out that like Jean-Baptiste in the book, man in general wills to do evil. His "fall" is not from some animal ancestry or original pair in a garden, but into the will itself, the human will that can assert itself against both man and God. The fall is that man has worshipped the idol of his own will and has willed his own self-esteem, to find that thus he could only despise himself and live with his guilt.

We have seen how Kennedy, Bartlett, and Buttrick see the origin of man's guilt as residing in some form of idolatry-the idolatry of numerous false gods including self-sufficiency and self-esteem.

Guilt is Forgetting God.

For some preachers the origin of man's guilt is to be found in the fact that man has "forgotten" God. One of these men is the theologian-preacher, Karl Barth. Barth sees all men as locked in a prison. This prison has been built

²²George Buttrick, Sermons Preached in a University Church (New York: Abingdon Press, 1959), p. 134.

because man has failed to recognize his dependence upon God. Man is to respond to God because he is a man and God is the Lord. He says,

God so works in the achievements of men against the achievements of men, whilst he awakens and illumines until men's eyes are opened and they see these achievements in terrible reality and cry out: "God be merciful to me a sinner."²³

As a result of man's "forgetfulness", God will bring judgment upon him until he recognizes with the Psalmist that "the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof." Barth reminds us that when God approaches man he does not ask man what is right about his life, but what is wrong. While man is measuring with his finite ruler, he himself is also being measured by God.

Along this same line of emphasis comes the statement of another theologian-preacher, Emil Brunner. He feels that guilt is a kind of penal retribution for ignoring God. He states,

We are anxious not because we live in the world but because we live in the world without God. That we forget God, that we reckon only with the world and not with the reality of God-this godlessness which is called sin in the Bible-this is the basis of our anxiety.²⁴

Brunner contends that the more we forget God the

²³Karl Barth, Come Holy Spirit (New York: Round Table Press, 1934), p. 4.

²⁴Emil Brunner, I Believe In the Living God (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961), p. 89.

more we depend upon this world for our meaning in life. And, since this world can offer only death, man begins to panic as he finds the door of death closing over him. He declares,

Man is the unhappy human being who is able to think and must think beyond the moment to death and beyond that, and yet knows nothing beyond death. This is why without really knowing it his life is stamped with anxiety about death and with hopelessness.²⁵

The preacher reminds man of his "forgetfulness" and thus interprets for him his reason for anxiety and guilt. Ritschl in his book, A Theology of Proclamation, states that the preacher's main task is to be a good exegete and declare the Gospel to man. He likes to quote Martin Luther who said that when the Word of God is preached it makes man's conscience before God happy and when man's word is preached it makes men's consciences in themselves "sad, narrow and anxious because it is word of law, wrath and sin pointing to what man has not done and all that he ought to do."²⁶

In somewhat the same way, William Sangster sees the origin of man's guilt in that man forgets to call upon God for help in his moment of need. For Sangster, sin and guilt are never justified because of the circumstances. He says in his sermon entitled "What To Do When You Stumble,"

How did you get into that guilty relationship, through loneliness-just through loneliness?" The Lord

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Dietrich Ritschl, A Theology of Proclamation (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1960), p. 12.

knoweth," says the Bible, "how to deliver the godly out of temptation."

Other people are lonely and don't get into that. The loneliness was only a factor. The lack of firm moral principle was the real cause, a failure to claim and use the help of God.²⁷

In the preceding discussion, we have seen how some preachers understand the origin of man's guilt to reside in his forgetting God. For some this forgetfulness is the cause of anxiety and other ills. For others, this forgetfulness means that man does not have the moral strength he needs when he faces temptation and, therefore, he sins and guilt is the result of his failure to "claim and use the help of God." The preacher's task in this case, which we will discuss later at some length, is to declare to man that God is here confronting man in his guilt.

Summary.

Although any one of the men studied may hold to more than one of the positions investigated, contemporary formulations of preaching reveal at least four different concepts concerning the origin of man's guilt. One group of preachers believe that man simply is guilty because that is the way things are. These preachers are more concerned about man as he now is than in discussing how he might have gotten this way. Guilt is something which they assume man

²⁷William Sangster, Can I Know God? (New York: Abingdon Press, 1960), p. 161.

experiences.

Another emphasis among preachers is the concept that guilt stems from man's moral disobedience. Man knows what is right, but he insists on doing wrong. Man has a free will and can choose righteousness or evil. Man's sin consists in his failure to live up to what he knows to be right.

A third group of homileticians sees the origin of man's guilt as involving some form of idolatry. Man is constantly seeking after other gods. These gods are never adequate to meet man's needs and thus man is forever ending up without that for which he is searching, and on top of his failure, he has also collected a burden of guilt. The greatest guilt producing "idols" are called self-sufficiency and self-esteem.

The origin of man's guilt for still a fourth group of preachers can be found in the concept that man has forgotten the God who made him. The result of this action is to experience a God forgetting anxiety which becomes the basis of man's weakened moral fiber and his lostness. Such a man can only wait for judgment or a word of grace.

Before we evaluate the above concepts, let us look at some current psychological theories concerning the origin of man's guilt.

PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORIES

Freudian.

In this section of our discussion on the origin of guilt, we are primarily concerned with the Freudian formulation and theory of this concept. Since our main concern is with the origin of guilt, we will not attempt to draw out the many other implications of this well known theory. We will likewise attempt to relate this theory as Freud conceived of it and not include at this time the many modifications which were made by his followers.

We are well aware of how Freud developed a topography of the mind by dividing its contents and operations into three mental systems: unconscious, preconscious, and conscious. He likewise later distinguished three functionally related structures of the mind: the id, the ego and the superego. In general, the id represents the basic drives (instincts), the ego is the mediator between the id and external reality, and the superego comprises the individual's moral precepts and ideal aspirations (roughly, his conscience).

It is the formation and function of the superego, with which we are concerned at this time. According to Brenner the function of the superego includes (1) the approval of actions and wishes on the grounds of rectitude, (2) critical self-observation, (3) self-punishment, (4) the

demand for reparation or repentance of wrong doing, and (5) self-praise or self-love as a reward for virtuous or desirable thoughts and actions.²⁸

The precursors of the superego are present in the prephallic or preoedipal phases of development. Here a child begins to be influenced by the demands and prohibitions of parents, or of nursemaids, governesses and teachers who may act as substitute parents. Probably the most critical area of conflict at this early age comes during toilet training. At this time the child experiences a conflict in the form of autonomy versus shame and guilt. The child wants to be able to please the parent figure and at the same time maintain his own autonomy and right to express his inner anger. He is still operating at this level on the basis of fear and punishment.

According to Freud, the superego, like the ego, is a function of personality which grows out of the id, but it is not recognized as such until around the ages of five or six. During the course of this oedipal phase, the earlier prohibitions of the parents begin to be internalized as a matter of personal morality. At this time the child begins to feel that moral standards and the demand that wrong doing must be punished, repented, and undone, come from within

²⁸Charles Brenner, An Elementary Textbook of Psychoanalysis (Garden City: Doubleday, 1955), p. 125.

himself, rather than from another person whom he must obey.

This internalization of the parental point of view by the child comes about through the process of identification with the parents in doing battle with the id impulses which emerge in the Oedipal struggle. Because the child is frightened by his own impulses to kill the one parent and the anticipated retaliation (castration) for his desire to engage in sexual activity with the other parent, he comes to see no alternative but to join forces with his parents in repressing these dangerous Oedipal urges. As he increasingly does so, the internalized "parent", the superego, comes into being.

Freud summarized this theory as follows:

Parricide, according to a well known view, is the principle and primal crime of humanity as well as of the individual. (See my essays on Totem and Taboo, 1912-1913). It is in any case the main source of the sense of guilt, though we do not know if it is the only one: researchers have not yet been able to establish with certainty the mental origin of guilt and the need for expiation. But it is not necessary for it to be the only one. The psychological situation is complicated and requires elucidation. The relation of a boy to his father is, as we say, an "ambivalent" one. In addition to the hate which seeks to get rid of the father as a rival, a measure of tenderness for him is also habitually present. The two attitudes of mind combine to produce identification with the father; the boy wants to be in his father's place because he admires him and wants to be like him, and also because he wants a powerful obstacle. At a certain moment the child comes to understand that an attempt to remove the father as a rival would be punished by him with castration. So fear of castration, that is, in the interests of preserving his masculinity, he gives up his wish to possess his mother and get rid of his father. In so far as this wish remains in the unconscious it forms the basis of the sense of guilt. We believe that what we have here been

describing are the normal processes, the normal fate of the so-called "Oedipal complex."²⁹

Thus it is believed that in the course of abandoning his incestuous and murderous wishes which constituted the oedipus complex, that the child's wishes become identified with the wishes of the parents. Instead of repudiating his parents who would oppose such wishes, he identifies with his parents and likewise repudiates these wishes. Therefore the superego consists originally of the internalized images of the moral aspects of the parents of the phallic or oedipal phase. Whenever the superego disapproves of the actions of the ego guilt feelings arise.

Contrary to the usual concept of "conscience", the superego is largely unconscious in its functions. As conceived by Freud, the superego becomes a kind of never sleeping censor which critically examines the impulses of the id and the various activities of the ego, ready to pounce upon and punish what is judged to be "immoral" and to regard with self-praise and self-love all desirable or virtuous thoughts, feelings, and action.

Some disapprovals of the superego can be identified in our conscious mind. When we break some moral commandment which we have set up for ourselves the result is a sense of

²⁹Sigmund Freud, "Dostoevsky and Parricide," in his Collected Papers James Strachey ed. (New York: Basic Books, 1961), V, 229.

guilt. However, there are many unconscious manifestations of the superego which are not so discernable. Freud pointed out that the commonest cause of painful and apparently unwarranted feelings of inferiority is disapproval by the superego. For all practical purposes, these feelings are the same as guilt. Brenner observes,

The conscious feelings which result from the approving or disapproving attitude of the superego in later life are easily understood when we realize that the superego is the introjected parental images and that throughout life the relationship between ego and superego is very similar to the relationship between a small child and his parents.³⁰

The superego, therefore, becomes both an advantage and a disadvantage for the ego. It is an advantage when it provides a defense for the ego against the id impulses. However, it is interpreted as a disadvantage when it prohibits the ego's independence and freedom to enjoy instinctual gratifications. The ego's loss of freedom and action is never quite recovered from the power of the superego. The ego must now do business with two powers which try to master it--the external environment and the id, as well as the internal prohibitions of the superego.

A critical evaluation of Freud's theory and some implications of its meaning will come at a later time in the paper. This present discussion has been an attempt to summarize briefly his main concepts concerning the origin of

³⁰Brenner, op. cit., p. 135.

guilt feelings.

Interpersonal.

When we use the term "interpersonal" in relation to a psychological theory, we naturally turn to Harry Stack Sullivan and his interpersonal theory of psychiatry. It is recognized immediately, however, that Sullivan's views are difficult to understand and quite ambiguous at points.

Mullahy states concerning Sullivan,

The writer in some ways most difficult to understand of the several psychiatrists and psychoanalysts we discuss is Harry Stack Sullivan. There are many reasons for this. Sullivan is not, as a reviewer put it, one of the writing psychoanalysts who can write a book "between patients." He has written little; his language is highly technical, and thought, as a rule, very complicated, subtle, and highly compressed.³¹

Sullivan's major thesis is that the primary concern of psychiatry is the study of interpersonal relations.

Sullivan's view includes more than the interaction between two people. He also referred to interaction between imaginary people who take on illusory or fantastic personifications.

For Sullivan, the goals of human behavior are the pursuit of satisfactions and the pursuit of security. Satisfactions, as he used the term, refers, to biological needs, including sleep and rest, sex fulfillment, food and drink, and physical closeness to other human animals. Security, on

³¹Patrick Mullahy, Oedipus: Myth and Complex (New York: Grove Press, 1948), p. 279.
³¹Patrick Mullahy, Oedipus: Myth and Complex (New York: Grove Press, 1948), p. 279.

the other hand, was used by Sullivan to refer to a state of well-being, of belonging, of being accepted. In keeping with this emphasis, Sullivan defines personality as "the relatively enduring pattern of recurrent interpersonal situations which characterize human life."³²

In our present discussion, we are primarily interested in Sullivan's views concerning the origin of guilt feelings. His theory on this subject is connected with his understanding of anxiety. For Sullivan there is little difference between anxiety and fear. Anxiety comes out of man's necessity to dwell in communal living. DeYoung summarizes Sullivan's thoughts on anxiety in the following manner,

In a further attempt to clarify the nature of anxiety, Sullivan asked his students to think of a continuum. The one pole of this continuum would be absolute euphoria. The opposite pole would be absolute tension. Absolute euphoria, if such an ideal could ever be experienced, would be experienced as perfect satisfaction and security. The experience of absolute tension would be analagous to the "uncanny emotions," such as terror, horror, loathing and dread. Anxiety, as these uncanny emotions, has a paralyzing power. It is like a severe blow on the head, which no one can stand for more than a brief flash of time. For the infant, anxiety is utterly unmanageable.³³

As the infant learns to handle his anxiety on the road to security, he begins to discriminate within himself

³²Harry Sullivan, The Interpersonal Theory Of Psychiatry (New York: Norton, 1953), p. 111.

³³Quintin DeYoung, "A Study of Contemporary Christian Theology (Kierkegaard and Tillich) and Modern Dynamic Psychology (Freud and Sullivan) Concerning Guilt Feelings" (Unpublished dissertation Ph.D., University of Southern California, 1959), p. 169.

certain personifications. He discovers something about himself that he calls "me". This "me" has three parts-" good me," "bad me," and "not me". Sullivan says it this way,

From the essential desirability of being good-me, and from the increasing ability to be warned by slight increases of anxiety ... there comes into being the start of an exceedingly important ...secondary dynamism ... the self-system.³⁴

While the entire self system is of great importance, the "bad me" is of particular interest in the understanding of guilt. Again, Sullivan says,

Bad me, on the other hand, is the beginning personification which organizes experience in which increasing degrees of anxiety are associated with behavior involving the mothering one in its more-or-less clearly prehended interpersonal setting. . . . The frequent coincidence of certain behavior on the part of the infant with increasing tenseness and increasingly evident forbidding on the part of the mother is the source of the type of experience which is organized as a rudimentary personification. . . bad-me.³⁵

Sullivan does not identify the bad-me with guilt, but it is the beginning of the structure that will relate the meaning of guilt to the self-system.

What does Sullivan say about guilt itself? In his book entitled Clinical Studies In Psychiatry, he defines guilt as, "the peculiarly colored anxiety which attends a clearly observed violation of an important governing principle of an individual's personality organization."³⁶

³⁴Sullivan, op. cit., p. 169. ³⁵Ibid., p. 162.

³⁶Harry Sullivan, Clinical Studies In Psychiatry (New York: Norton, 1956), p. 112.

From this observation, it is obvious to see that we must look for the roots of guilt in the earliest interpersonal experiences of the individual. As we have already mentioned, the "bad-me" is the beginning of the "guilty-me".

For Sullivan, guilt is a complex emotion. And such emotions develop at a relatively late date in the personality structure. He states concerning these emotions,

A group of security operations born of experience which has gone into the development of these complex unpleasant "emotions" is equally hard for one to observe and analyze. These are movements of thought and the actions by which we, as it were, impute to, or seek to provoke in, the other fellow feelings like embarrassment, shame, humiliation, guilt, or chagrin.³⁷

It is obvious, however, that Sullivan insists on the interpersonal nature of such complex emotions. Guilt is the product of unfortunate interpersonal experiences. It is not transcendently conditioned unless one happens to believe in the transcendental will.³⁸

However, as we have mentioned, Sullivan, unlike Freud does not place guilt itself in the earliest stages of experience. He says that "Guilt is a function of behavior in central awareness; that is, it occurs in circumstances in which people would know what they are doing . . . and it is the only form of anxiety, I suppose, that most people can exper-

³⁷Sullivan, The Interpersonal Theory of Psychiatry, p. 379,

³⁸Ibid., p. 346.

ience in which there is such clarity."³⁹

There is an additional concept concerning guilt which Sullivan holds that will prove to be interesting in comparing it with Freud's theory. For Sullivan, guilt is strictly a conscious phenomenon. It would, therefore, be unnecessary to look for the evidences of unconscious guilt which play such an important part in Freud's formulations. Sullivan says,

Guilt is a drop in euphoria due to our not having lived up to our most important convictions of what we are good for and how we should live--and this drop in euphoria--this anxiety-- is horribly unpleasant, and like all anxiety, practically always provoking in personal relations, real or fantastic.⁴⁰

Nevertheless, Sullivan does recognize what he calls "crazy guilt." This kind of guilt arises as a defence against anxiety, but it cannot be true guilt for there has been no violation of the individual's governing principles. Sullivan speaks of this guilt as follows:

When you hear a person talk about experiencing guilt, he may actually be talking about guilt, or he may be talking about rationalization by which he escapes clear awareness of anxiety. Very often it is the latter, which is a nuisance, particularly if you are a psychiatrist who falls into unnoted collaborations with this confusion.⁴¹

Here again the emphasis is interpersonal. Sullivan thinks it is nonsense when a person feels guilty about something that has not consisted in a break in interpersonal

³⁹Sullivan, Clinical Studies In Psychiatry, pp. 113-14

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 114.

⁴¹Ibid., pp. 112-13.

relationships.

According to this analysis, "true guilt" as Sullivan sees it, cannot play a very significant role in psychopathology. For true guilt is a fully conscious phenomenon. However, "crazy guilt," can be a psychiatric nuisance, and if not diagnosed accurately, it can lead to some serious clinical errors. However, since guilt represents a grave threat to the security of an individual, it may very well involve the whole personality in turmoil.

DeYoung, again has done an excellent job in synthesizing Sullivan's contributions along this line. He summarizes Sullivan's thoughts on the origin of guilt by saying,

It may be asserted that Sullivan attributes the genesis of guilt to interpersonal experiences of the kind that evoke anxiety. The roots of guilt are most certainly to be looked for in the bad-me personification and malevolent transformations; but neither of these dynamics are necessarily guilt-oriented. Acculturation, particularly at the later developmental levels, plays a most important role in the establishment of these "governing principles", the violation of which produces true guilt.⁴²

Neo-Freudian.

With the term Neo-Freudian, we wish to designate those individuals who follow many of Freud's general considerations, but have made some significant amendments and revisions of Freud's original theories. Again, we will be looking for the contributions of the Neo-Freudians concerning the origin of guilt.

⁴²DeYoung, op. cit., p. 182.

It is evident that one of the significant contributions along this line has been made by Melanie Klein and other child analysts who recognize that anxiety feelings are among the earliest an infant experiences. The anxiety of the infant arises from a threat to its independence, that is, the loss of the object upon which it depends. The dependence is not felt until there is some kind of deprivation. When dependence is threatened, anger and aggression are aroused.

According to Klein,⁴³ the infant experiences the mother-breast in two basic ways. He experiences her as the "good" mother, the mother who gives, who sustains, who fills, who satisfies needs (basically, who gives life). He responds to this experience with kindness, gratitude, wishing to preserve that which sustains him. He feels "peaceful". The infant also experiences the mother as the "bad" mother, the mother-breast who is not there, who deprives, inflicts pain by her absence (basically, who threatens death). His response to this experience is one of frustration, rage, the wish to destroy that which threatened to destroy him. He feels "helpless", threatened with death."

McKenzie points out the significance of this experience for later life. He says,

That the fundamental meaning of this experience lies in the fact that the need for security and safety is

⁴³Melanie Klein, Envy and Gratitude (London: Tavistock, 1957).

awakened at the same time as it is jeopardized. The mother or nurse reacts to this display of anger and aggression in a manner which baby senses as disapproval, and the fear of losing the loved object is also experienced; and that means anxiety.⁴⁴

An illustration of the above discussion is found in understanding the feelings of the child as it relates to the mother when it is hungry. The infant is eager to be fed, however, the milk seems to be slow in coming. This event frustrates the infant and he becomes angry and aggressive and bites the nipple; in return he may receive a gentle slap from the mother. This immediately arouses within the infant the fear of losing the love object upon which he has learned to depend for his sustenance and life. Thus begins the experience of ambivalence-the hate and love towards the same object.

At some time in the infant's life these anxiety feelings take on a social quality and he feels a sense of guilt. Perhaps his guilt will stem from his own sense of judgment upon himself for attempting to harm the love object. But, however it develops, whether, as Freud held, it developed during the oedipal period or not, the early beginnings of conscience and the origin of guilt may be found in the infant's clash of love and aggression. It may be noted here, that the child does not have to act out his impulses to feel guilty, even the aggressive impulse itself against the love

⁴⁴John McKenzie, Guilt: Its Meaning and Significance (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), p. 31.

object is grounds for a tremendous sense of guilt.

Two other Neo-Freudians, Karen Horney and Erich Fromm, are sometimes called "dynamic cultural" analysts. This name reflects their emphasis on the position that the primary dynamic principles are seen in interpersonal relations (Sullivan would also be a member of this group) and efforts at self maintenance, and the primacy of the more specific biological demands so heavily stressed by Freud is repudiated.

They conceive of their approach as essentially optimistic, with faith in the natural creative potentialities of man at birth and at any stage of his life's cycle. They, therefore, in general, reject Freud's instinct theory and his structural approach toward the mind (id, ego, superego). They do feel, however, that their work falls within the basic framework of Freudianism and that the old master's major contributions were made in his doctrines of psychic determinism, unconscious motivation, and emotional nonrational motives.

In light of this new emphasis on the "cultural" forms of pressure upon any given person, many of the Freudian concepts have been reinterpreted. The Oedipal complex is not a sensual aggressive conflict between a child and his parents but an anxiety growing out of basic disturbances; for example, of rejection, overprotection, and punishment in the child's relationships with his mother and father. Aggression is not inborn, as Freud stated, but is a means by which man tries

to protect his security. Narcissism is not really self-love, but self inflation and overevaluation owing to feelings of insecurity.

Horney feels that the basic principle which determines human behavior is the need for security. When a wide range of factors in the environment produces insecurity with the child, he develops basic anxiety. This anxiety is the feeling a child has of being isolated and helpless in a potentially hostile world. This child then develops various strategies by which to cope with his feelings of isolation and helplessness.

He may seek revenge on those who have misunderstood him. He may through excessive submissiveness attempt to win back their love. Or he may develop an unrealistic, idealized self-image in order to compensate for his feelings of inferiority. If he cannot get love, he may resort to power or exploit people. He may become highly competitive and the desire to win then becomes the strongest drive in his life. In some way he attempts to live with himself and his feelings. He wants to gain back what has been denied him.

Any of the above trends may become neurotic in their defensiveness and striving. Horney clearly states that the trend of neurotic development involves a fundamental problem of morality (and we might add, of guilt). This problem is "that of man's desire, drive or religious obligation to

attain perfection."⁴⁵ She asks the penetrating question as to whether or not man should attempt to reach the Christian injunction of "Be ye perfect. . ." And if it would be wise to get rid of the inner dictates which drive him to seek this goal. She says that she does not wish to discuss a possible answer except to say that a solution to the problem must be found in an understanding of human nature. To her, there are three basic concepts of morality which rest upon different interpretations of human nature. The origin of guilt feelings will depend upon which concept is accepted by the individual as a guide for his striving.

The first definition of morality comes from the camp that feels that human nature in some way is either depraved or ridden by primitive instincts-Reformed theology fits the former and Freud the latter, although she does not spell this out. For this group she contends morality consists of superimposed checks and controls with the goal being to tame or overcome the status natures and not its development.

The goal of morality, she feels, must be different for those who see both good and evil in human nature. This goal will center around the eventual victory of the good as it is refined, directed, or reinforced by such elements as faith, reason, will, or grace. She states that here man is

⁴⁵Karen Horney, Neurosis And Human Growth (New York: Norton, 1950), p. 14.

driven to reach his goal by the use of prohibitive and checking inner dictates.

The third alternative and the one which she endorses is a belief that inherent in man are evolutionary constructive forces which urge him to realize his given potentialities. This belief does not mean that man is essentially good. It does mean that man by his very nature and of his own accord strives toward self-realization and that his set of values evolves from such striving. She thus arrives at a morality of evolution in which the criterion for what one cultivates or rejects in himself-what constitutes the origin of real or neurotic guilt-lies in the question: Is a particular attitude or drive inductive or obstructive to my human growth? Horney feels that in an autonomous striving toward self-realization one does not need an inner strait jacket (moral laws) with which to shackle spontaneity, nor the whip of inner dictates (faith, will) to drive one on to perfection. She believes that these restrictions are not needed, for they are injurious to growth and that the best way of dealing with destructive forces within oneself is to outgrow them. "The way toward this goal is an ever-increasing awareness and understanding of ourselves. Self-knowledge, then, is not an aim in itself, but a means of liberating the forces of spontaneous growth."⁴⁶

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 15.

Fromm, as a Neo-Freudian feels free to use psychological concepts which might be found in many different schools. He tends to think mainly in terms of the problems of dependency, powerlessness, hostility, and their counterparts, with great stress on the development of the self and on the conflict between the need to feel part of a larger unit and the need to be oneself. He considers as primary man's need to find meaning in life.

He sees the tension in man arising not from his need for security, as does Horney, but as an escape from freedom and individuation. His major contribution seems to lie in his effort to relate the psychological forces operating in man to the society with which he lives. Every man, by reason of his acculturation, which means by reason of being human, must acquire the various materials of his culture. If he grows up in fortunate circumstances where he is given a fair chance to develop his capacities he will be able to reorganize and work over and recreate these materials to such a degree that he will become what Fromm calls a productive human being. Otherwise, he will develop one of what he calls the non-productive orientations.

Fromm's essential theme is man's need to find meaning in his lonely, individuated life. He holds that man can use his unique individual freedom to unite himself with his fellow men in a spirit of loving productiveness to achieve self-fulfillment and to develop a better society, or he can

retreat from freedom by submitting himself to the bondage of an authoritarian society.

It is at this point that Fromm makes his contribution concerning the origin of guilt. For Fromm the most general category of escapism seems to be authoritarianism. The most general formulation of this concept seems to be any escape from the isolation of one's selfhood by recourse to external powers. Such powers may be personal and direct, as exemplified in the leader, whether of a totalitarian state or of a Boy Scout troop, in the father or an all-seeing God who enforces decrees by immediate punishment or tender love. This authority may be internalized as conscience, like the Freudian superego or it may have the anonymity of some "natural law" or still more concealed power of the "market".

Fromm rebels at authoritarianism for at least two reasons: (1) all authoritarianism tends to stifle the productivity of man by relieving him of his personal responsibility. This makes it unnecessary for man to learn a satisfying control of himself and his world; (2) a psychological reason for opposing authoritarianism is that the drive toward free expansion of man's own powers is, however obscurely, in continuous revolt against authoritarianism, with consequent subjective feelings of dissatisfaction, anxiety, frustration, and guilt.

Fromm discusses guilt as follows:

The internal voice of authority informs a man that he is wasting his powers and dissipating his potentials. The feeling of guilt arising from this source is inevitable. In a sense, man is alienated from his ideal self. He feels guilty for being himself and for not being himself, for being alive and for being an automaton, for being a person and for being a thing.⁴⁷

When a person follows an authority figure, he receives a certain amount of self protection as a result of this belief. However, in order to gain this protection, he must surrender his individuality and freedom. Fromm thinks it is ridiculous to believe in irrational authority such as a religious doctrine which teaches such items as the indiscriminate slaughter of the first-born of the Egyptians, of all male infants contemporaneous with the birth of Jesus, predestination to eternal damnation of unbaptized infants or merely some people irrespective of merit.

In the place of authoritarian ethics Fromm places humanistic ethics. This system requires a conscience and social regulation, however, the distinction is that the authority resides in man himself. Under authoritarian ethics guilt is usually defined as disobedience. A good conscience under this system depends on blind submission, mitigated by trust in the love of a superior. Fromm sees this as a withdrawal from the constructive love of self and from human responsibility for the destiny of the race. Ruth Munroe

Erich Fromm, Man For Himself (New York: Rinehart, 1947), p. 158.

thinks of two hymns sung in many Protestant churches as examples of what Fromm is talking about:⁴⁸

Content to let the world go by,
To know no gain nor loss,
My sinful self my only shame,
My glory all, the Cross.

Keep Thou my feet. I do not ask to see
The distant scene; one step enough for me.

Existential.

Having looked at the Freudian, Interpersonal and Neo-Freudian views concerning the origin of guilt, we now turn to another popular current psychological theory-Existentialism.

The wide influence of existentialism in philosophy, theology, and literature is well known. However, at present we are interested in the existential movement in current psychological theory and more particularly what it is saying about the origin of guilt. Two of the authoritative books in this field at the present time are Existence, edited by Rollo May and Psychoanalysis and Daseinanalysis written by Medard Boss. It is from these two sources that most of our material concerning the topic at hand will be gleaned.

Existential analysts emphasize the importance of the individual's values and goals and direct their attention toward understanding his personal world-his world of values.

⁴⁸Ruth Munroe, Schools of Psychoanalytic Thought (New York: Holt, 1955), p. 465.

Their contention is that other therapists fail to formulate in explicit terms their understanding of the general nature and specific values of man and are, therefore, guided by hidden philosophical presuppositions which block their understanding of the patient.

By analysing the "meaning-structures" of each patient's personal world of values and by stripping themselves of preconceived notions about the nature of values of man, the existential analysts claim that they have discovered that the essential nature is a basic kind of being or "beingness" and that the outstanding human unity, a being-together-in-the-world.⁴⁹

Boss clearly distinguishes his views from those of Freud. Freud described the development of the superego as that which became man's conscience and the source of his guilt feelings. Hence, man experiences feelings of guilt every time he violates, or intends to violate, one of the commandments which have been drilled into him. Boss observes that Freud never spoke of guilt as such, but only of guilt feelings.

However, in contrast to Freud, Boss declares,

Daseinanalysis acknowledges more than guilt feelings, certainly more than the secondary, externally determined ones which can be removed by psychoanalysis. In the view of analysis of Dasein, man is primarily guilty. His primary guilt starts at birth. For it is then that he begins to be in debt to his Dasein, insofar as carrying out all the possibilities for living of which he is capable is concerned. Throughout his life, man remains guilty in this sense, i.e., indebted to all requests

⁴⁹Robert Harper, Psychoanalysis And Psychotherapy (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1959), p. 77.

that his future keeps in store for him until he breathes his last.⁵⁰

For the existentialist, man's guilt is the never ending call of his conscience that reminds him that he is failing to carry out the mandate to fulfill all his possibilities. This essential, inevitable being-in-debt is guilt, and not merely a subjective feeling of guilt. May interprets this concept of guilt as follows:

Nor is the guilt exclusively linked up with the religious aspect of this or any patient's experience; we can be as guilty by refusing to accept the anal, genital, or any other corporal aspects of life as the intellectual or spiritual aspects. This understanding of guilt has nothing whatever to do with a judgmental attitude toward the patient. It has only to do with taking the patient's life and experience seriously and with respect.⁵¹

An evaluation of the existential position and its contributions concerning ontological and neurotic guilt will be made later on in this study. For the present it seems to be clear that existentialism in psychology sees the origin of man's guilt as part of man's being. According to this particular theory, guilt is not something man has, but something is.

Summary.

For the Freudian, guilt has its earliest origin in

⁵⁰Medard Boss, Psychoanalysis And Daseinanalysis (New York: Basic Books, 1963), p. 270.

⁵¹Rollo May, Existence (New York: Basic Books, 1958), p. 54.

an event that occurred in pre-history. During this time an act of parricide took place for which man has always carried an unconscious sense of guilt. This event is reenacted in every generation in the oedipal struggles of the child. During this time of ambivalence the child must learn to handle the impulses of the id so that the ego is not overwhelmed. The superego is developed as a way of controlling the id and dispensing guilt and pleasure to the ego. The content of the superego comes from the dictates of the parents and their own superego restrictions plus the prohibitions of society.

For Sullivan and other "interpersonalists", guilt is the product of unfortunate interpersonal experiences. It has its beginnings in the development of the "bad me" concept of the child. However, guilt occurs in circumstances where people know what they are doing. Guilt is an early form of anxiety which is clear enough for people to identify as guilt. On the other hand, "crazy guilt" is a way of avoiding real guilt. This guilt is neurotic and becomes a psychotherapeutic nuisance.

The Neo-Freudians recognize the beginnings of guilt in the earliest stages of infancy. Here, the infant is caught in ambivalent feelings toward the love-object. He experiences love and aggression at the same time. When he shows his aggression he fears he will lose the object of desire and life. He likewise develops an anxiety which when

it takes on a "special quality" becomes guilt.

Guilt in the adult, according to these theorists, is often the result of submission to false authority. The authoritarianism of others attempts to control the spirit of freedom within man and the result is a feeling of guilt whenever the authority is not obeyed. Likewise, man erects various idealistic images and attempts to reach these images as a means of handling his anxiety. The "tyranny of the should" and the "search for glory" trap man until he develops neurotic trends in an attempt to please them. Man is always in search of a kind of morality but he seldom allows his own freedom and inner growth to determine the destiny of his life.

Existentialism sees guilt as part of being human. Guilt is present at birth, just as potentiality is present at birth. Man does not simply have "guilt feelings", man is guilty. He is guilty of not living up to his potential as a man.

SYNTHESIS AND APPLICATION

Comparison of Preaching and Psychological Formulations.

In this particular section of our research we want to compare the preaching and psychological formulations concerning the origin of guilt. We have seen how preaching formulations represent several points of view on this topic. To some preachers the origin of guilt is unimportant. For them man is guilty and they are to speak to this condition. If these men were pressed concerning what origin they might give to guilt, they probably would come up with a doctrine of original sin or that man is guilty because he sins.

Other views held by preachers include the concept that the origin of guilt is to be found in man's moral disobedience. This concept says that man knows what is right and does not do it. Or they might say that man's guilt stems from his pride or self-sufficiency which are idols that he worships and which in turn control him. Some also would say that man has forgotten God--forgotten to ask for his help in time of temptation and is, therefore, suffering from a "God forgetting anxiety" which is really a basic sense of guilt.

We have also looked at the various interpretations concerning guilt's origin which are proposed by psychological theories. We have noted how Freud sees all guilt as coming from a parent-child conflict which has resulted in a kind of "conscience: called the superego. Most guilt feelings are

therefore simply a kind of infantile regression--moving back to childhood when the authority of parents was really the person's standard of right and wrong.

Other psychological theories view guilt as a conscious break in interpersonal relationships or the rejection of a statute of conduct which one has accepted for himself. One theory will stress the importance of early infantile behavior and still others place importance on the social milieu and conformity to social standards as the origin of guilt. The existentialists would say to be human is to be guilty.

As one looks over this investigation, it is easy to see how Stein could make the following observation:

There exist at present, many different conceptions of the origin and function of guilt. It is not uncommon to find psychologists who consider most guilt feelings a regressive kind of behavior that should be removed. Alongside these professionals, one may find men in the same field with equally recognized reputations claiming that the guilt process is the raison d'etre of a high level of culture. . . . From the religious point of view, guilt is both exploited and abhorred. It is the fulcrum that provides leverage for the exploitive authoritarian. It also exists as his target.⁵²

However, beneath the obvious differences, there are at least two things in common between the psychological and preaching formulations; they both recognize and accept the fact that man experiences guilt in his personal life and that he sets

⁵²Edward Stein, "An Analysis of the Theory of Guilt Formation in the Personality and Some Implications for Christian Thought" (Unpublished dissertation Ph.D., University of Southern California, 1953), p. 2.

up certain standards for his behavior.

Both formulations recognize that man experiences guilt. Stein has given us his broad eclectic definition of guilt feelings as "the name for tension, threat, anxiety, or internal aggression aroused through organismic activity, mental or physical, which is opposed to the superego."⁵³ The use of the term "superego" in this case means some concept of conscience. This kind of definition obviously includes everyone. No one today is disputing the reality of guilt feelings in the human psyche. All that we have studied thus far are different interpretations of this universal human phenomenon.

Along with the above observation, it is also easy to see that both theories recognize that man establishes some kind of standard for his conduct. The psychological theories remind us that the standard may come from parents, society, the general culture, or from the experience of being human. However, the preaching formulations in general believe that the standard which is broken and thereby causes guilt is somehow connected with God and His will for man.

The preaching formulations center their attentions on the experience of guilt itself. By doing this they seem to assume that any experience of guilt is somehow a break with the laws of God or an affront to His holiness. They

⁵³Ibid., p. 64.

very seldom attempt to distinguish between guilt which manifests itself in infantile regressive behavior and the existential creative guilt which accompanies human existence. This approach in general identifies "conscience" with God. In this case if a person feels guilty it is because he "is under conviction" and needs to be forgiven. The fact that this "conviction" may have nothing to do with God is seldom considered.

On the other hand, the psychologist is not always willing to acknowledge the limitation of a theory that says,

A scientific psychology is absolutely free of moral valuation. For it, there is no good or evil, no moral or immoral, and no what ought to be at all; for a scientific psychology, good and evil, moral and immoral, and what ought to be are products of human minds and have to be investigated as such.⁵⁴

Even though the above statement is not true of many psychotherapists, such a theory obviously limits the investigation of guilt on the part of psychology to observation and reporting. However, the psychological theorists seldom stay in this non-judgmental role when it comes to evaluating guilt and preaching. While the psychologists have been making pronouncements concerning the "meaning" of guilt, the preachers have been interpreting guilt "feelings". This kind of confusion has led McKenzie to comment "The gulf between the theologian's and the preacher's concept of guilt

⁵⁴Otto Fenichel, The Psychoanalytic Theory of Neurosis (New York: Norton, 1945), p. 5.

and sin and that of the common use of the term by ordinary people, novelists and the psychologist is wide and deep."⁵⁵

At present there appear to be at least three questions which must be entertained if we are to understand and integrate the preaching and psychological positions. First, Is there such a thing as objective guilt? The answer to this question would include an investigation into the differences between psychological formulations and theological formulations of guilt with regard to its objectivity. In other words we are asking, are all standards of conduct equally valid and equally subjective? Is there a "reality" behind certain guilt feelings?

The second question is, What is the difference between true and false guilt? This question attempts to get at the confusion about guilt feelings as the first question attempts to probe the objectivity of standards.

The third question is rather obvious in light of the purpose of this paper. What does this investigation and the response to the above questions have to do with preaching today? In what way can preaching be helped because of the information gained from this study? How is it applicable?

Objective and Subjective Guilt.

The question before us is one which separates the psychologist from the theologian or preacher. This question

⁵⁵McKenzie, op. cit., p. 128.

deals with the concept of guilt as objective or subjective. Is there a difference between guilt and guilt feelings? Is there an objective reality to guilt? White⁵⁶ reminds us of how the word "guilt" means one thing to a theologian and another to a psychologist. To the theologian, the word will at once suggest something reprehensible and blameworthy. To the psychologist, it will suggest more often a pitiable affliction, probably a delusion; a symptom of a disorder which causes intense suffering, inhibits life and joy in living, and which calls for as much sympathetic understanding and as little reproach as does physical sickness.

Quite often the attitude of the theologian toward guilt will be interpreted by the psychologist as quite inhuman and immature; while to the theologian or moralist, the attitude of the psychologist will often seem unrealistic, amoral, anarchic and perhaps dangerously sentimental. To this general disagreement, the Christian may be tempted to add that the psychologist's attitude betrays a deplorably frivolous attitude to sin and to its terrible consequences in time and eternity; a view which may only confirm the suspicion of some psychologists that religious teachings are compounded of ignorant fears which are a menace to public health and individual happiness.

⁵⁶Victor White, O.P., "Guilt: Theological and Psychological," in Philip Mairet (ed.) Christian Essays in Psychiatry (New York: Philosophical Library, 1965), p. 156.

Jacobsen has suggested:

In this connection the question may be raised if there is not a danger in a study such as this of confusing guilt as feeling with guilt as something more real, religious, or existential. When psychiatrists and theologians have come together to discuss the subject of guilt, it has been the consensus that the psychologists will concern themselves with guilt feelings and will leave it to the theologians to speak of guilt itself.⁵⁷

Likewise, Bartlett has commented:

It may be confessed frankly that on the question of the nature of guilt there still is need for much discussion and conciliation of points of view. It is a generalization but basically true to say that thus far mental hygiene has been more concerned with "guilt feelings" while the Christian Gospel, with its assumption of moral order, has thought in terms of real guilt.⁵⁸

In the Concise Oxford Dictionary "guilt" is defined as "The having committed a specified or implied offense: criminality, culpability." For the preacher, the "offense" may be against God. Nevertheless, it is objective and real. On the other hand, Drever's Dictionary of Psychology defines guilt as, "Sense of wrong-doing, as an emotional attitude, generally involving emotional conflict, arising out of real or imagined contravention of moral or social standards, in act or thought." White observes that this last definition

⁵⁷Sverre T. Jacobson, "The Interpersonalism of Guilt and forgiveness in the Writings of Harry Stack Sullivan and Emil Brunner" (Unpublished dissertation Th.D., Princeton Theological Seminary, 1959), p. 195.

⁵⁸Gene Bartlett, "The Preaching and Pastoral Roles," Pastoral Psychology, II (March 1952), 26.

indicates the psychologist's interest in the subjective emotional attitude of the person who is experiencing the guilt. However, he does suggest that a great deal of misunderstanding could have been avoided had the psychologists consistently spoken of a "guilt-sense" rather than of plain guilt.⁵⁹ He likewise indicates that the psychologist and especially the psychiatrist and the psychotherapist, will be little occupied even with the sense of guilt as long as this is nothing more than a realistic consciousness of having committed an undoubted wrong, even when this consciousness is more or less heavily accompanied by regret or any other fitting emotion. This kind of guilt is best treated by the minister. The kind of guilt that usually is brought to the psychologist is one which has become obsessive, inhibiting or otherwise morbid.

In an attempt to understand the difference between the theological-objective concept of guilt represented in some formulations of preaching and a general psychological concept of subjective guilt, McKenzie quotes Professor T. Torrance of New College, Edinburgh, concerning the meaning of objective guilt.

Objective guilt goes down to the roots of man's existence. His sin takes place within the life-relation which he derives from God. He uses the very life and being which God gives him and maintains in him--even when he sins--to sin against God, and so introduces a contra-

⁵⁹White, op. cit., pp. 157-58.

diction into his being and existence. It is at this level that God opposes him, even when God gives and still regards him as made for God and for communion with God. Hence, deep in man's existence we have this difficult state.

On the one hand, he lives by deriving his being and life from God, and God continues to give Himself to man in spite of his sin. On the other hand, this Self-giving of God to the sinner is the active love of God that counters and opposes the movement of sin in man, his self-will. Hence the opposition to man's sinful motions, or God's judgment upon sin enters as a determining element in the existence of man as estranged from God. Guilt is thus rooted in man's existence, in the divine "No" to his sin-determined and selfishly-oriented existence. This element of guilt is made acute by the pouring out of God's Love in Christ, for now God does not hold Himself back, but actively seeks the sinner for his salvation, and in that lovement the tension of guilt is brought to its most acute point and brought out into the open-hence the Cross.

Concerning this statement McKenzie says, "Now that is an excellent description of theological objective guilt. Redemption and guilt are linked together."⁶⁰

Catholic theologians have been working on this problem for some time and there seems to be very little doubt in their minds as to the meaning of objective guilt and the place of the psychiatrist in treating guilt in general. Falcone points out that the Catholic theologian is primarily interested in the conscious and responsible activity of men. For them "guilt is a responsible action of man which results in a state of aversion from Almighty God and has as a concomitant or, more often, as a consequent result a healthy

⁶⁰McKenzie, op. cit., pp. 128-29.

and normal feeling of having done wrong"⁶¹ According to this interpretation, for the theologian, guilt is the result of a conscious free action. The minister is only interested in neurotic guilt feelings when they give an "indication of diminished responsibility" and become a hindrance to the spiritual progress of the individual under his care.

Along this same theme Falcone relates the following declaration from Pope Pius XII concerning the meaning of objective or real guilt:

To the transcendent relations of the psychism, there belongs also the sense of guilt, the awareness of having violated a higher law, by which, nevertheless, one recognizes himself as being bound, an awareness which can find expression in suffering and in psychic disorder.

Psychotherapy, here, approaches a phenomenon which is not within its own exclusive field of competence, for this phenomenon is also, if not principally, of a religious nature. No one will deny that there can exist—and not infrequently—an irrational and even morbid sense of guilt. Yet a person may also be aware of a real guilt which has not been wiped away. Neither psychology nor ethics possesses an infallible criterion for cases of this kind, since the workings of conscience which beget this sense of guilt have too personal and subtle a structure. In any case, it is certain that no purely psychological treatment will cure a genuine sense of guilt. Even if psychotherapists, even in good faith, question its existence, it still abides. Even if the sense of guilt be eliminated by medical intervention, auto-suggestion or outside persuasion, the fault remains, and psychology would deceive others and itself, if, in order to do away with the sense of guilt, it pretended that the fault no longer exists.⁶²

⁶¹John Falcone, "A Study of the Theological and Psychiatric Aspects of Guilt" (Unpublished dissertation S. T.L., St. Mary's University, 1961), p. 28.

⁶²Ibid., pp. 26-27.

By now it seems obvious that whether Catholic or Protestant, it is impossible to understand the meaning of guilt apart from the whole concept of sin. DeYoung reminds us that whatever is said of sin in any given theological system, may be said with equal validity about guilt. "For guilt is nothing more or less than the existential awareness of sin."⁶³ As the individual becomes aware of his sin he ipso facto becomes aware of his guilt. Confronting his guilt he may attempt to convert it into some type of neurotic guilt, into pietistic moralism or into censorious puritanism. Psychology cannot tell a man when his anxiety has become guilt or sin. A person can cope with guilt through both neurotic and religious means. The way he chooses may have something to do with how his guilt is interpreted to him. In other words, people tend to deal with guilt in one of two ways: (1) either by repressing it or converting it into some neurotic symptom, or (2) by accepting and seeking some form of salvation.

In summary, any misunderstanding between the psychological and preaching or theological formulations of the origin and nature of guilt is to be found in a failure to distinguish between guilt and a sense of guilt, and between a sense of guilt related to actual offenses and a sense of guilt related to imaginary offenses.

⁶³DeYoung, op. cit., p. 246.

Falcome⁶⁴ summarizes his findings by declaring that normally guilt as understood by the theologian is primarily conscious, rational and voluntary in nature, while guilt as understood by the psychologist is fundamentally unconscious, emotional and involuntary in nature. If this distinction is followed then the cure of the moral disorder would belong to the domain of the theologian while the cure of the emotional disorder would belong to the realm of the psychiatrist. It is obvious that there are many cases where this neat dichotomy does not apply. The whole question of man's freedom and responsibility is part of this dichotomy.

An important observation to make concerning the above discussion is that it makes a great deal of difference as to how guilt is interpreted. The basis of this difference is pointed out when Bartlett said, "The Christian Gospel, with assumption of a moral order, has thought in terms of real guilt." The word "assumption" is an all important one. Psychology, as Fenichel observed, theoretically cannot make a value judgment upon guilt. But the Christian Gospel can and must if it is to be true to its commitment. There is an objectivity to guilt if one is committed to the objectivity and revelation of God in Christ. All guilt is not relegated to feelings.

The Christian view regards guilt as meaning simply

⁶⁴Falcone, op. cit., p. 89.

that there has been a change in the relation between God and man; guilt expresses a broken fellowship. Guilt means that sin is not only the transgression of a divine law and the destruction of an order which God has established and sustained, as if it were some impersonal evil belonging to the realms of law and reason, but that sin is the destruction of communion with God, the breaking of the personal link which holds God and man together.⁶⁵

Most Christian theology is not content to conceive of sin and guilt as being primarily a socio-cultural acquisition or accretion; rather, Christian theology sees sin and guilt as a metaphysical problem. Sin and guilt are not something man has, they are something man is. In the Christian view, man is sinful and guilty, and while his sin and guilt are generally regarded as original, they are not regarded as infantile. Insofar as psychology refuses to consider this dimension would seem to be inevitable.⁶⁶

When a person believes in the "assumption" that there is a moral order, and this assumption is not limited to theologians, he has established for himself the reality of objective guilt. However, he must now investigate our next question which is concerned with how one distinguishes between true and false guilt or between healthy or unhealthy guilt. Objective and real guilt can take on false, unhealthy and neurotic proportions within the personality. How does a preacher know when he is directing people to face real objective guilt and when he is promoting unhealthy, false and neurotic guilt? This last question is the one that directs our next inquiry.

Real and Neurotic Guilt.

In our previous discussion we were concerned with

⁶⁵Jacobsen, op.cit., pp.140-41. ⁶⁶DeYoung, op.cit., p.42.

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whether or not guilt could have an objective basis. The conclusion was that the objectivity of guilt depended largely upon whether or not one acknowledged some kind of a moral order. For a psychologist like Fromm this moral order is based on humanistic values, while for the preacher it is derived from the revelation of God. Guilt is often more than simply a subjective experience. However, it is usually the subjective experience that causes people the most pain and is the most deceitful in its appearance. It is at this level of experience that we have our greatest problems in preaching and counseling.

Part of the problem is simply in terminology. Sullivan and Brunner, as a representative psychologist and theologian, both speak about "real" guilt. However, Sullivan uses this term to indicate that the subjective feeling or experience is real while Brunner means to say that the guilt is real in that it springs from a violation of the will of God. "These two senses of guilt will often be simultaneously present, but not always. One may be genuinely and truly guilty before God without feeling it distinctly as that kind of guilt. Conversely, one may have guilt feelings without taking into consideration his guilt before God."⁶⁷

The problem of ascertaining the meaning of the sub-experience of guilt is most difficult. A normal person,

⁶⁷Jacobsen, op. cit., p. 196.

and by normal we mean "the mentally well person in whom the elements of balance definitely out-weigh elements of imbalance,"⁶⁸ will have guilt feelings which are in proportion to the intellectual estimation and the objective extent of his offense. However, as Vanderveldt has observed:

But in abnormal cases, feelings of guilt do not always run parallel with intellectual insight, because the quality and the intensity of men's emotions is determined not only by intellectual insight but also by temperament, physical constitution and previous experience. The cynic and the criminal psychopath may have a perfect insight into their guilt, and yet remain emotionally untouched. On the other hand, there are cases in which a person experiences guilt feelings out of all proportion to his real guilt, or at least out of proportion to what the common run of people experience. . . . Even after confession he (neurotic) continues to bring up again and again his guilt in a self-perpetuating effort and ends up by feeling even more insecure. As a consequence, he may go to great length in an effort of self-punishment and expiation.⁶⁹

We now actually have two considerations before us.

We must try to determine the meaning of guilt in relation to its object and its experience. A person may have an objective basis for his guilt—that is, he is consciously aware of what he has done and that he is guilty for having done it. However, he may still ask the question, "Should this action have caused such guilt feelings?" He wonders, "Is this feeling of guilt not a 'false' guilt even though it has an objective character to it?" A person reared under a

⁶⁸James H. Vanderveldt, O.F.M. and Robert P. Odenwald, Psychiatry and Catholicism (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1952), pp. 187-88.

⁶⁹Ibid., p. 283.

fundamentalist theology may feel guilty when he smokes a cigarette or goes to a movie. A housewife may feel guilty for going out to eat when she could have saved money by cooking at home. In each case, the person has some objective standard of conduct which he has accepted for himself and which he has broken. However, this standard may be false or immature and thereby produce unnecessary and growth restricting guilt.

Our second consideration has to do with "how a person feels in his subjective experience of guilt regardless of its objectivity. When the house wife "breaks" the standard of conduct set up for her by her mother, which has become a part of her own superego, does she go into deep depression, feel totally unworthy of love and cannot forgive herself for such an awful and terrible act? Even when the act is real and not an imagined one, does the person have a disproportionate reaction to the deed in light of its overall meaning to life? The answer to this last question, of course, can only be stated after studying the individual in his circumstances.

Let us look at the first consideration which raises the question, "Is there some way in which we can better understand about what a person ought to feel guilty?" Or as Tournier suggests, "What criterion are we to adopt in order to say whether the person who adjudges himself guilty

really is guilty or not?"⁷⁰ One approach to this subject has been made by attempting to distinguish between "functional" and "value" guilt. A feeling of "functional" guilt would be one which results from some social suggestion, fear of taboos or of losing the love of others. A feeling of "value" guilt would be a genuine consciousness of having betrayed an authentic standard; it would be a free judgment of the self by the self. In this case, one guilt-producing mechanism would act upon social suggestions and the other on moral conviction. In a discussion on this topic, Tournier rightly observes:

Functional guilt, normal in children, continues at an intense level in all neurotics, and at a lower level in all normal adults. So it appears in Freudian doctrine as the sign of infantile fixation or regression, of childish dependence on parents, or other human authorities, which is abnormal in the adult. It seems then, that it may well be labelled "false guilt". And yet, it is frequently through training that we recognize ourselves as guilty of real faults, a judgment suggested certainly by other people, but authenticated by our inner conviction, with result that the term "false guilt" is no longer adequate. You see how delicate the problem is:⁷¹

If the above distinction is accepted, then functional guilt would become synonymous with neurotic guilt and "false" guilt, and value guilt synonymous with "true" guilt. However, it is often observed that a "false" guilt is only a way of disguising a "real" guilt. For Sullivan "true"

⁷⁰Paul Tournier, Guilt and Grace (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1962), p. 63.

⁷¹Ibid., p. 64.

guilt would be a break in interpersonal relationships and "crazy" guilt would be "false" guilt. For the existential psychologists, true guilt would be any denial of one's true potential or a refusal "to be"; this is the real guilt of man for which many substitutes have been formed in order to avoid facing it. Along this same line, Martin Buber says that "true" guilt is characterized by the fact that it always turns on some violation of human relationships, and therefore constitutes a break in the I-Thou relationship. "True" guilt is therefore always a guilt toward others.

It is interesting how the thought of Jung and his expositors follow the general line of the existential psychologists and Buber. For Jung "true" guilt comes at the rejection of individuation. He says,

Insofar as every individual has the law of his life inborn in him, it is theoretically possible for any man to follow this law and so to become a personality, that is, to achieve wholeness . . . and since life only exists in the form of living units, i.e., individuals, the law of life always tends toward a life individually lived.⁷²

Likewise one of Jung's followers comments on this concept:

Thus, true guilt is failing to heed the "call of God"-that is, psychologically speaking, the demands of the self... Neurotic guilt is usually the projection of a real guilt, that is, a guilt toward the self, the

⁷²Carl Jung, "The Development of Personality," in his Collected Works (New York: Pantheon Books, 1953), XVII, 179.

deepest law of one's deepest being.⁷³

So far we have seen three aspects of the same phenomenon. "True" guilt is here being expressed in three different linguistic forms: guilt towards oneself is the language of Jung; guilt towards others and one's potential is the language of the existentialists and Buber; guilt towards God is the religious language of the Bible ("Thou hast . . . sinned against thy soul" Hab. 2:10; "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned." Psalm 51:4). Tournier-correctly observes that:

Thus the true guilt of men comes from the things with which they are reproached by God in their innermost hearts. Only they can discover what these things are. And they are usually very different from the things with which they are reproached by men.⁷⁴

Having concluded that "true" guilt has to do with one's personal commitment to a kind of relationship with himself, others, and God, let us now look at this relationship in terms of its experience. We want to examine some aspects of guilt which have been called neurotic.

The capacity to experience guilt is necessary for man in order to help him direct his life in meaningful relationships and to fulfill his own personal destiny. However, the sense of guilt can become distorted and produce sickness instead of health. It seems to be more difficult

⁷³Edward C. Whitmont, M.D., "Guilt and Responsibility", Spring, (New York: The Analytical Psychology Club of New York, 1964), pp. 20-21.

⁷⁴Tournier, op. cit., p. 67.

in religion than in any other personal experience to determine when guilt has become distorted and is neurotic and when it is basically healthy and creative. Niebuhr has commented that:

The inability of Freudianism to comprehend the reality of a free self prompts it to reduce the problem of guilt to the manifestations of neurotic guilt. Neurotic guilt may be defined as the sense of guilt due to fancied violations of arbitrary norms. It has little to do with the sense of guilt arising from the self's violations of norms accepted by it as valid, and validated by the experience of other men.⁷⁵

The best discussion of this problem is found in the work of Karen Horney.⁷⁶ In a very clear and incisive manner she demonstrates how the neurotic personality uses self-re-
crimination in a defensive manner. For this type of individual, guilt feelings are welcomed. Even though he has difficulty in expressing himself in other areas of involvement, he can readily confess his own faults.

The neurotic often feels as if he does not deserve any better than he now has. But he also has a basic fear of being discovered. Someone may detect the facade under which he lives. This fear often prompts him to confess wrongs and accept guilt feelings in order to avoid exposure by others. However, as one might suppose, this type of person is seldom

⁷⁵Reinhold Niebuhr, The Self and the Dramas of History (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1955), p. 11.

⁷⁶Karen Horney, The Neurotic Personality of our Time (New York: Norton, 1937).

convinced that he really is guilty. His actions are, therefore, motivated more by fear than by conscience. As Horney puts it, "In our culture it is considered nobler to fear God than to fear men, or in non-religious terms, to refrain from something because of conscience rather than because of fear of getting caught."⁷⁷

Not only is the neurotic seldom convinced of his unworthiness, but he also lacks the kind of humility that goes with genuine feelings of guilt. The guilt which he confesses is a way of avoiding disapproval. He has a fear of annoying other people. From his point of view his security and well-being are dependent upon other people liking him and approving of what he does. In order to hide how weak, insecure, and helpless he really is, he takes opportunities to confess his neurotic guilt before others so, in turn, he might receive their words of approval or help. The reassuring statements of others are the reward for his guilt feelings.

The experience of neurotic guilt may also be a way of attacking and reproaching others under the guise of confession. The neurotic admits to guilt feelings because in reality he cannot admit what he really feels. His real feelings would contain aggression which in turn would alienate the affection of others. One of the most destructive

⁷⁷Ibid., p. 235.

sides to this type of guilt feelings is that it prevents the neurotic from doing anything about his real self. Again, we quote Horney:

To return now to self-recriminating attitudes, another function they serve, in addition to protecting against a fear of disapproval and inviting positive reassurance, is to prevent the neurotic from seeing the necessity for change and, in fact, to serve as a substitute for change.⁷⁸

Therefore, neurotic guilt or guilt feelings as used by a neurotic person, may be a means of defense and a way of avoiding real guilt. Tillich puts it very succinctly when he says that, "Neurosis is the way of avoiding non-being by avoiding being."⁷⁹

We have seen that although "true" guilt is basically healthy, it can become dominated by dynamics which are predominantly unhealthy. At this point guilt becomes distorted and destructive. Some of the observations which Freud made concerning guilt give us a clue as to the function of this distorted and unhealthy guilt in human personality. Freud observed that guilt can be a distortion of the present by being a shackle of the past. The guilt which one feels may not be a response to the situation in the present but may have its roots deep in the history of the individual and

⁷⁸Ibid., p. 246.

⁷⁹Paul Tillich, The Courage To Be (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952), p. 66.

therefore derive from an event or desire that is long since past. In other words, one's past can live in the present and distort it. In discussing this insight of Freud's, in an article in Pastoral Psychology, Aden Says,

It is this kind of repetition of the past-a repetition which narrows our vision and distorts our reaction-that may be active in a sense of guilt. When it is, we are usually unaware of its presence and power. The end result is obvious: Our guilt feelings will be much more intense than the actual situation warrants, since we are reacting not only to a current experience but also to some unknown and former experience. Furthermore, as long as we remain unaware of the real source of our guilt feelings, we are not able to resolve them properly or to prevent their reappearance in the next situation.⁸⁰

Another observation which Freud made that helps us to understand the dynamics of neurotic guilt is that there is often a split between that of which a person is guilty and that of which he feels guilty. This distortion in the sense of guilt is often used by the neurotic, but a person does not have to be neurotic to use it. In short, its function is defensive-one can confess his guilt to a lesser charge in order to avoid a greater one. A person is able to distort the constructive function of guilt feelings in order to serve his immediate purposes. In other words, "A sense of guilt, then, is not an automatic pilot. It does not have a built-in capacity to direct us to the real source of trouble."⁸¹ Or another way of saying the same thing would

⁸⁰LeRoy Aden, "Distortions of a Sense of Guilt," Pastoral Psychology, XV (February 1964), 19.

⁸¹Ibid., p. 22.

be:

True guilt assumes a personal responsibility for one's action, and a dedicated interest in altering it, while false guilt would utilize all the neurotic evasions in order to maintain the status quo without the assumption of responsibility for one's behavior.⁸²

In this particular discussion we have been attempting to determine the real and neurotic elements in guilt. This has led us into an inquiry concerning true and false guilt with regard to its objective basis as well as a study of the real or healthy and neurotic or unhealthy experiences of guilt. Having looked at these aspects of distorted guilt our next question is how are we to apply this research to preaching. What observations need to be made with regard to these findings that will help the preacher address himself to true and healthy guilt without reinforcing the criticism that preaching creates neurotic and unhealthy guilt feelings.

Conclusions.

Preaching and the psychological origin of guilt.

Preaching has often been criticized for "creating" guilt feelings in people. It is obvious from our discussion thus far that a sense of guilt is "created" within an individual long before he comes under the influence of any type of preaching.

⁸²Leon Salzman, "Guilt, Responsibility and the Unconscious, Pastoral Psychology, XV (November 1964), 26.

The Neo-Freudians have pointed out how guilt feelings begin in infancy with the anxiety of the infant and his ambivalence toward the "love object". Such feelings continue to grow and find the point of their intensity in the child's relationship with his parents during the oedipal period. This latter concept which Freud espoused has left no person without some form of conscious or unconscious guilt feelings.

The Interpersonalists and "cultural dynamists" remind us that guilt feelings form from unfortunate relationships between persons or from the acculturation process itself. In either case, a child soon acquires images of himself and expectations from others which cannot help but create within him feelings of failure and guilt.

At the same time that some schools of psychology are pointing the finger of blame to parents or culture, the Existentialists say that guilt is a part of being human-of living in an ambivalent world and seeking to find meaning and true existence in life. The unfulfilled potential of each man haunts him and creates within him a sense of non-being which only forces him into an experience of existential anxiety and ontological guilt. The recognition that guilt feelings begin in infancy and that the conscience is highly developed in early childhood has led McKenzie to observe:

There need be no antagonism between psychiatrist and minister. The priest or minister does not need to create guilt feelings; they are there in us all though often hidden or disguised.⁸³

However, because of a misunderstanding of the nature of guilt, preaching can misinterpret, misapply or misunderstand the meaning of guilt. A misapplication of the meaning of some Scripture passages can stimulate and intensify a great deal of unhealthy and destructive guilt feelings. When this is done, the minister is usually unwittingly arousing repressed or unconscious guilt feelings toward parents or others which seldom have anything to do with either the Gospel or true guilt. Nevertheless, even recognizing this perversion, guilt is seldom if ever created through preaching. However, preaching sometimes does take advantage of what is already in existence.

Preaching and false guilt. When preaching concentrates on stimulating guilt feelings over certain cultural prohibitions, it is directing the feelings of guilt away from the central issue and concentrating on false issues. True guilt deals with man's refusal to give up his own lordship. It has to do with man's acceptance of himself and his potential before God. Guirdham's criticism is well taken when he observes:

If one sees a newspaper heading to the effect that a parson or minister has been inveighing against the

⁸³McKenzie, op. cit., p. 127.

sinfulness of his generation, the betting is very heavily in favour of his having taken the subject of sensuous indulgence in some form or another for his theme. It is only rarely that one will find he has been excited by those sins of hardness of heart and lack of charity which should be especially deplored by the Christian.⁸⁴

Just as the Pharisees in Jesus' day were masters at stimulating and handling false guilt, so modern Pharisaism in preaching helps people to name particular sins so they can concentrate on them and forget about the weightier matters of the law such as loving mercy, doing justly and walking humbly before God. It is here that an understanding of the interpersonal nature of guilt is important.

The application of our study concerning Freudian concepts of guilt would show that preaching not only reinforces false guilt when it dwells on cultural prohibitions, but also when it appeals to superego, infantile consciences with regard to loving others and serving God. Since all people repress certain aggressive feelings towards others, and particularly toward parents, it is not difficult to stimulate guilt feelings on Mother's Day or by identifying God with our earthly father. What usually happens is that we feel sorry for God; our heavenly father is weak and his feelings are hurt because we are angry at him. This may stimulate some guilt feelings, but they are infantile and

⁸⁴Arthur Guirdham, Christ and Freud (London: Allen and Unwin, 1959), p. 100.

only result in repression, depression, or alienation.

Likewise the Neo-Freudians can point out to the preacher that this same type of false guilt is stimulated when such things as anger and aggressiveness are identified as sins. In short, the people are being told that "feeling" is wrong. Naturally people will respond to this with guilt feelings because they have learned as infants that their aggression can destroy the object of their love and hence their life. However, this observation is that of the infant. In fact, the mother would not leave the child because of his aggressiveness. On the contrary, a healthy mother desires to see some aggressiveness in the child. The result of this type of preaching is the repression of aggression and anger and not its destruction. Instead of dealing with aggression openly, it is covered over with pious sentiment which results in indirect attacks. The cruelest people are the self-righteous--the ones who have dealt with their false guilts and suppressed their true ones.

Preaching and neurotic guilt. Our discussion of Horney and Fromm has pointed out how guilt can be both healthy and neurotic. The neurotic in the church who is using his guilt as a defense is often looked upon as the most spiritual. He is able to respond to guilt stimulating preaching because it helps him in his own response to others. As has been observed, this type of guilt only keeps the neurotic from facing himself and changing his basic

orientation in life.

Many preachers look for a "response" to their preaching. In an attempt to stimulate interest in the sermon and motivate people to make a decision, they use illustrations which will stimulate guilt feelings in the congregation. This is often done without realizing that everyone, except some who are mentally ill, experience guilt and that if the preacher "fishes" around long enough he will be able to "convict" someone. However, this "conviction" which produces guilt feelings may have nothing at all to do with God.

Following a recent "revival" service at a local church, the minister of the church excoriated the people because they had not made "decisions" following the evangelist's sermon. The minister was obviously embarrassed and was now using some guilt-producing device to attack the people. Next time the evangelist gives an invitation someone may feel "guilty" and make a "decision" because he feels sorry for the pastor or because he doesn't want a father figure to be angry with him. In this case the guilt does not come from God and is likewise unhealthy.

Preaching and constructive guilt. At the beginning of Barnes' dissertation he states:

An assumption of this study is that guilt arises from the very nature of life and death itself. Guilt is present in human behavior not because of those acts which a person desires to enter but refrains from doing because of some mysterious and unrealistic socialization

process which restrains him but because of the finite quality of life. Guilt comes as a consequence of personality development.⁸⁵

After studying the psychological origin of guilt, the preacher should be aware that guilt feelings are necessary for creative living. Even the negative superego has a function for the child--namely, to keep the ego from being overwhelmed by the id. The person who has not developed this capacity is ill and needs help. In many cases, this type of person will make the therapist his conscience and vicariously use his strength to ward off his own destructive impulses.

However, the Existentialists' insight into guilt should help release the preacher from fears lest in discussing sin and guilt in the pulpit or in the study, he might cause his parishioners to become neurotic. He might derive some assurance from knowing that it is often the repression of guilt that causes neurosis and not its experience or confession. The assertion that ontological guilt does not lead to symptom formation but to more creative efforts toward authentic selfhood should be helpful to the preacher who hesitates to present to his people the claims of Christ concerning the fulfillment of life through identification with him. In short, the minister does his people a disservice

⁸⁵Charles Barnes, "Some Aspects of Guilt Related to the Preaching of Protestant Ministers" (Unpublished dissertation Ph. D., Boston University School of Theology, 1962), p. 2.

when he does not help them feel healthy guilt about the right things.

Later in the paper, we will discuss the application of psychological principles to the preaching of judgment, responsibility and grace. However, let us now summarize briefly what we have been saying in this section.

Summary.

A comparison of the psychological theories concerning the origin of guilt with the preaching formulations of the same led us to observe that we were dealing with a difference in the definition of guilt. The preacher or theologian is speaking mainly about guilt in terms of its objectivity even though he often makes pronouncements about its experience. The psychologist treats guilt principally in terms of experience although he makes many pronouncements about its meaning.

This observation led us to discuss the objective and subjective realities of guilt. The objectivity of guilt is largely dependent on whether or not a person accepts the "assumption" of a moral order. However, even though a thoroughly trained scientific psychologist cannot make value judgments concerning guilt, he still uses words like "ought" and "should". Both the psychologist and the preacher recognize that guilt is a reality in human experience and that it is both objective and subjective.

The discussion of real and neurotic guilt was broken

down into an inquiry concerning true and false guilt along with healthy and neurotic meanings. True guilt comes from a rejection of one's own selfhood and the refusal to accept the responsibility to be a human being with potential. False guilt is infantile in origin and deals mainly with prohibitions which help one to avoid facing "real" guilt. True guilt is usually healthy, but a neurotic person can use any kind of guilt defensively. Likewise a normally healthy person, due to factors of which he is usually unaware, can carry with him a sense of guilt which has taken on neurotic proportions.

We have said that preaching is obviously not the origin of man's guilt but that it is easy for preaching to reinforce false guilt. It is good for the preacher to recognize that all guilt is not healthy but that guilt is both necessary and can be the creative force of life. In regard to this last observation, Bartlett has sagaciously commented:

Preaching which seeks to relate our common experiences and our God-centered faith to each other has a real contribution at this point. Obviously the Gospel that, in Christ "we know what God is and what through him man may become" carries with it a profound interpretation of life. It offers a sustaining hope in despair, a possibility for the use of suffering, a promise of a new sufficiency through faith in God, and an assurance of the worth of every person. To clarify this meaning, often as against the disintegrative meanings which are its alternatives, is a highly important function of preaching made possible by the very Gospel the preacher interprets.⁸⁶

⁸⁶Bartlett, "The Preaching and the Pastoral Roles," p.27

CHAPTER II

THE INTERPRETATION OF GUILT

FORMULATIONS OF PREACHING

Now that we have studied the origin of man's guilt according to contemporary preaching formulations, let us see what preaching has to say about the interpretation of this guilt. What does man's experience of guilt mean? The first question which we will investigate concerning this problem is, "What are some of the evidences of man's guilt"? Granted that man is guilty, what does a preacher point to as evidence of this fact?

Evidences of Guilt.

Pearson asks the preachers to remember that every congregation includes among its members a considerable group of people who sin, suffer for their sin, but do not know it is sin from which they suffer. They are Christians but do not live Christian lives. They seem to be unaware of the difference between what they confess and what they are. They are guilty before God, but they don't seem to realize the meaning of their guilt. Pearson says that the evidence of man's guilt is that "lying, cheating, stealing, robbery, adultery, murder"¹ are often found among members of a church

¹Roy Pearson, The Ministry of Preaching (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959), p. 49.

He reminds us that many of the people involved in this activity may regard their actions "as infractions of an arbitrary, human code rather than as sin against a loving, heavenly Father, but for the most part the Christian community is aware of their evil, and their effects are readily observable."² For Pearson, evidences of guilt are found in the inappropriate conduct of church members.

A man like Haselden follows the same general pattern as Pearson. For him the evidence of man's guilt is to be found in both personal and cultural terms. The present peril of man is such an evidence--a peril which includes, "wars, slums, racial strife, broken homes, political corruption, morbid and dying cultures."³ In the individual personal life, the evidence comes in the form of "anxiety, bitterness, emptiness, despair."⁴ As we have already mentioned, Haselden's main concern is that the preacher sound a note of warning to man that his future peril is even greater than his present.

Another evidence of man's guilt is the way he ignores the claims of God upon his life. Kennedy likes to quote Dr. Herbert Farmer of Cambridge as saying that there

²Ibid.

³Kyle Haselden, The Urgency of Preaching (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), p. 45.

⁴Ibid.

can be no comfort for mature persons aside from a claim. To this observation Kennedy responds, "A generation that separates the two will shun the cross and regard evil as an illusion. There is no more certain sign than that of spiritual sickness."⁵

Kennedy also is concerned about another evidence of man's guilt which has involved him in substituting man for God. Just as the origin of man's guilt is idolatry, so the evidence of this guilt is his daily worship of himself instead of God. This deification of man came about when man decided that men were good and that he needed no power outside for his salvation. Man often thinks that knowledge is the key to the golden age. However, to the contrary, knowledge can never lead a man to salvation. Kennedy quotes an inscription which may be found in the Nebraska State House, "Eyes and ears are poor witnesses when the soul is barbarous." To which he replies, "Human knowledge is destruction and not salvation, if the heart is evil."⁶

Some preachers see the evidence of man's guilt in current literature. For someone like Buttrick, novels such as Camus' The Fall give evidence of the inner turmoil of man and the guilt he feels toward himself and God for not

⁵Gerald Kennedy, His Word Through Preaching (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1947), p. 139.

⁶Ibid., p. 154.

fulfilling his potential as a person. Even man's prayer is the cry of his guilt. Buttrick poignantly comments:

The whole issue is burdened and darkened by the fact that we cannot forgive ourselves or mend the course of history. We cannot forgive ourselves because our sin is not merely against ourselves: it is against our neighbors, and more deeply it is against life and the Source of Life. . . Sin is poison poured into the stream of time. Man's only language in his shame is a cry: "God, be merciful to me a sinner."⁷

So far we have seen the evidence of man's guilt depicted in his broken relationships with his fellow man, the breaking of moral standards established by the church or community, the meaningless existence which he leads as he attempts to worship his own accomplishments and the inner futility he experiences as he faces himself and his own lack of courage to a person. Other preachers see the evidence of man's guilt in his personal suffering and mental anguish. They see man's anxiety as an evidence of his guilt and estrangement from God.

Bartlett, one of this latter group of preachers, comments:

By anxiety we mean, of course, not just the passing feelings of apprehension which accompany times of stress. Real anxiety is the feeling that the very center of life is threatened, that one's personhood is at stake.⁸

⁷George Buttrick, Sermons Preached in a University Church (New York: Abingdon Press, 1959), pp. 134-35.

⁸Gene Bartlett, The Audacity of Preaching (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1962), p. 89.

By pointing out the meaning of anxiety, Bartlett is saying that man feels anxious because he has substituted God for a false sense of self-sufficiency. It is not until he sees his own finitude and dependence upon God that he will be able to renounce his false hopes and find his salvation in Christ. Thus, Bartlett says that in part, the meaning of the hour of preaching is to bring a new word, a saving word, into the dialogues of personhood.

In much the same manner, Pike suggests that we speak to man in the midst of his felt needs. One of man's greatest needs is to learn how to handle the anxiety which arises from a sense of his own guilt.⁹ This anxiety manifests itself in various states such as fear, inhibition, loneliness, indecision, and despair. In short, man's psychological suffering is also an evidence of his guilt.

Now that we have looked at preaching concepts concerning the evidence of man's guilt, we come to another aspect of interpretation of this experience by examining what contemporary preaching says are the results of man's guilt. These two aspects of the problem are very similar. However, as in the previous discussion we were asking, "What does the preacher point to as evidence of man's guilt?" In the next inquiry we will be asking. "As a result of his

⁹James Pike, A New Look at Preaching (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1961), p. 52.

guilt, what is man's relationship to himself, God and others?" We will also include in this inquiry what preachers think their role is in confronting man in his guilt.

Results of Guilt.

The theologian-preacher Emil Brunner sees insanity as one of the results of man's guilt which has its origin in forgetting God. He states,

The more men forget God, the more therefore does the world become the one and only thing for them. . . That is why insanity is particularly great in the world today, because forgetting God has spread widely and become common.¹⁰

Brunner goes on to say that the reason man continues to forget God is that he wants to be his own Lord. When man says that he cannot believe in God--that too many doubts stand in the way, Brunner replies:

Quite right; but the doubts stand in the way of faith only because you will not stop being your own lord. No man has ever doubted and not believed for any other reason than this one. The will not to obey God, sin, is therefore the deepest reason for anxiety about life.¹¹

The result of this reasoning is that anxiety, which is the result of sin, which is the result of forgetting God, cannot be overcome until one's relationship to God is changed. Therefore, according to Brunner, the results of guilt are sin, anxiety, and hopelessness.

¹⁰Emil Brunner, I Believe in the Living God (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961), p. 90.

¹¹Ibid.

When Fosdick speaks on the results of man's guilt, he always includes its effects upon other people. He stresses the fact that as a result of man's guilt and sin, which he always puts together, many other people suffer, i.e., the woman who is wronged by her husband, the father who waits for his son to return from the "far country" and particularly those who are close to man and from whom he needs forgiveness. In this discussion Fosdick asserts over and over that the only way out of guilt is the way of forgiveness. He even states:

Go even to the psychiatrists, who in more ways than this are saying what Christianity has been saying for centuries. One of the leading psychiatrists in the world said to a personal friend of mine recently, "Most of the cases of mental derangement of a functional type are due to a sense of guilt".¹²

What are the results of guilt for Fosdick?--heartache for others and possible mental illness for the one who carries with him the load of guilt.

As a result of guilt, according to Sangster, man is alone and under the judgment of God. He does not always indicate of what this judgment consists, however, Sangster speaks to man in this condition with understanding and compassion. Man is not a deplorable creature who is inevitably evil, but rather he is a person in the image of God who has been overtaken in a fault. He says it this way:

¹²Harry Emerson Fosdick, Riverside Sermons (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1958), p. 300.

How do you deal with yourself when you have been overtaken in a fault? All of us stumble at times. Some of us crash. Others may, or may not, know about it, but we know and God knows! How do we handle ourselves in an hour like that? We may be tempted to wallow in the evil and deny that it is sin at all. We may make restitution and feel, falsely, that restitution (important and necessary as it is when possibly) has canceled out the sin. We may be so engulfed in shame that we just give up.

Let me see, as one sinner talking to others, if I can help you at that point.¹³

The kind of advice Sangster gives concerning this person is forthright and to the point. He warns man not to make light of something that is serious and not to deceive himself into thinking that his guilt can be justified because of the circumstances or that morality can vary from age to age. He then goes on to give what he conceives of as a resolution to these results of guilt.

When we speak of the results of guilt, we also include the attitude of the preacher toward his responsibility to proclaim the Gospel. In this regard Davis has some definite opinions. He shows where such expressions as "rebuke", "reprove", "expose", "convict" and "refute" have their rightful place in the preaching ministry of the church. As we have before mentioned under the origin of man's guilt, Davis warns against preaching which does not find anything wrong in man. Man's delinquency and guilt are real problems

¹³William Sangster, Can I Know God? (New York: Abingdon Press, 1960), p. 159.

and must be dealt with as such. One cannot reassure a person that all is right when it obviously is not. Therefore, there is nothing more futile than an attempt to reassure people in a situation that does not justify reassurance.

The result of guilt in personal life is a sense of lostness. Until something is done about the relationship that has caused the guilt feelings, it is meaningless to attempt to bring words of comfort. Davis states:

But if desperate sickness and cancerous self-consumption is the truth about us, if nothing short of God's own surgery can save us, the necessity of that radical treatment can be shown only by a true diagnosis. Otherwise we shall be covering malignant sores on the fair body of man with a sugary ointment.¹⁴

Davis is concerned about the tremendous influence Freudianism has had on preaching. He recognizes the fact that the psychological interpretation of man which began with Freud has saturated our art, literature and even the preacher's concept of his role. In this interpretation, man is not a rational hero or a conqueror, but rather a being with a complex personality full of unlovely desires, self-deception and treacherous disguises. Man has all kinds of subversive and conflicting forces working with him. And above all else even his reason is a slave to his non-rational wishes. Davis suggests that perhaps the preacher today will have to rethink historical and psychological man and

¹⁴Grady Davis, Design for Preaching (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1958), p. 230.

attempt to relate the Freudian man with biblical doctrine.

Davis feels that as a result of the Freudian influence, anything that is clean and hopeful carries with it "a certain objectionable odor of sentimentality."¹⁵ Nevertheless, without a sense of hope man is lost. And indeed the preacher plays a shoddy trick on mankind if he does nothing but destroy his idols and leaves him with the terrible results of his guilt. As Davis says to the preacher through the personality of another in his book, "The symbols of our material and social achievement are legitimate objects of devotion, if there are no better. Show us God, or don't ask us to listen."¹⁶

Another preacher who gives a sympathetic but pointed response to the results of man's guilt is Thieliicke. In her sermon on "The Parable of the Prodigal Son", Thieliicke interprets man's dilemma through the character of the prodigal who in one episode thinks to himself:

Why can't a fellow be his own boss? Don't do this and don't do that. Always coming around with his everlasting "Thou shalt not"; always jerking the leash and whistling a fellow back. Even these "children" Adam and Eve may often have rebelled at this when they were in Paradise, in the "Father's house". There, too, was the prohibiting sign, "Thou shalt not", and very specifically placed on the tree of life with all the dark allurements of its mysteries. There for the first time appeared that annoying limitation: so far and no farther. "And you call that freedom; always tripping over barriers and signboards; how is a fellow going to

¹⁵Ibid., p. 239.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 241.

be able to develop and live his own life with the old man constantly stepping in with his house rules?" Just so have Adam and Eve and all their children and children's children sighed and groaned again and again.¹⁷

Thus the result of man's guilt is not to know true freedom--to mistake the "father's house" for a prison when all the time he is in bondage to himself. Escaping to what he thinks is freedom, man finds himself bound to his own urges and, therefore, he must satisfy them. He is bound to a grand style of living and, therefore, he cannot let it go.

We have been looking at how preachers perceive the results of guilt in man's life and how they conceive of their own role in light of these results. For some preachers the results of guilt are mental illness and insanity. For others, guilt results in hurting others and a loss of personal freedom. Man is now unable to ascertain the real good from the false. Most of the preachers see man in this deplorable condition and want in some way to help him face this condition and to respond to the only help possible in the Gospel. Let us now look at some preachers who see man's experience of guilt as a motivation to respond to this Gospel and to ask for help.

Guilt as Motivation.

One of the most outspoken preachers on the theme of guilt as a motivating power is Soper. He likes to quote a

¹⁷Helmut Thielicke, The Waiting Father (New York: Harper & Row, 1959), p. 19.

great British Methodist who said that in any congregation, normal or otherwise, sixty-five years ago, one could count on a general sense of guilt. Now the only thing one can count on is a general sense of doubt. Soper fears that social science has helped to destroy the sense of personal responsibility and morality within our culture. He has commented that "just as in the nineteenth century Darwinism overthrew the theology of the church, so today the principles of social science may well overthrow the moral claims of the Christian faith."¹⁸

However, even though man's morality may be overthrown through the influence of social science, the preacher must today appeal to the social conscience of man. Soper has found that the only way to reach man's conscience and help him develop any enthusiasm for morality is through an appeal concerning some community objective. The older method of reaching man's guilt feelings through a personal appeal does not work because "one of the results of our present age is a great sense of personal euphoria."¹⁹ By this Soper is saying that contemporary man has nothing for which to fight or crusade. One of the greatest contributors to this euphoria is the removal of any immediate danger of death.

¹⁸Donald Soper, The Advocacy of the Gospel (New York: Abingdon Press, 1961), p. 49.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 22.

According to Soper the preacher's great objective is to reach men for Christ. If the preacher cannot count on a general sense of sin and guilt in his congregation, then he must appeal to some social evil in which they are participating. Nevertheless, the point we wish to make here is that Soper feels that a "sense of sin" or "conviction" is absolutely necessary as a motivating power to get man to accept the Gospel. Therefore, the preacher makes a contact wherever he can in order to lead men to what they really need in Christ. Soper says it this way:

If it is a fact that we cannot count on the immediacy of a sense of sin, and have to begin further back, as it were, to establish contact with those with whom we would reason for Christ's sake, then it follows that preaching is an arena in which the confrontation must be in terms of ideas or of problems rather than of the sinful soul with the challenge and offer of Christ.²⁰

Another preacher who speaks most dramatically about the power of guilt as a motivating force is P. T. Forsyth. We have already discussed how Forsyth sees the origin of man's sin in his scorning the love and holiness of God. In another statement Forsyth says that it is not that the preacher lacks ardour to save men, but he lacks courage to face God. He says, "We can never fully say, 'My brother!' till we have heartily said, 'My God'; and we can never heartily say 'My God' till we have humbly said, 'My Guilt!'"²¹

²⁰Ibid., p. 45.

²¹p. T. Forsyth, Positive Preaching and the Modern Mind (London: Independent Press, 1907), p. 134.

The importance of having a sense of guilt as a means of motivation is likewise stated by Kennedy. He feels that, as was the case with Dorian Grey, men can look at themselves only for a limited time before they are driven to despair. One of his favorite Biblical stories in this regard is that of David and Nathan. When Nathan told David, "Thou art the man," he was speaking as the Prophet of God who spoke to both peasant and king. Kennedy then comments, "My moral failure is something much different from my intellectual failure. If a man makes a mistake in judgment or a mistake because he lacked knowledge, that is something quite different from making an immoral choice."²² An immoral choice reflects upon the kind of person the man is and this means a break in relationships. In light of this, Kennedy states, "Many a man is saved by guilt, and the beginning of a better life is often that moment when a man confesses, 'I was ashamed.'"²³ In short, Kennedy sees the power of guilt as a motivating force because of the personal shame which accompanies it--which likewise speaks of a personal God who has been offended.

True communication of the Gospel for a preacher like Miller, includes confronting man with the fact that God is not a god of rest and comfort; he is not the simple purveyor of peace, plenty, and health, but is often the One who

²²Kennedy, op. cit., p. 135.

²³Ibid.

invades lives and smashes all of these things. He states, "To communicate the gospel, therefore, is to confront men with the 'good news' that its tragic dimensions make their human tragedies pale into significance, and they are led into the awareness that their real need lies in their radical dislocation from God."²⁴

This radical "dislocation from God" means that the preacher is to confront men with the Word of the Cross until he raises in the minds of all men the question, "Were you there when they crucified my Lord?" and the response comes back: "Yes, I was there!"

There are representatives of another group of preachers who see the motivating power of guilt, but in a somewhat different way. They see man as already guilty and in despair and the word of the preacher is a word of hope and not a word of judgment which would only increase their feelings of helplessness and hopelessness. A man like Jones wants to help preachers believe and persuade his hearers to believe that men are redeemable. "Man's pathway is strewn with sordid sins and their consequences. Crushed beneath the burden of guilt and the wages of sin, men do not find it easy to believe they can be forgiven and begin life

²⁴Donald G. Miller, The Way To Biblical Preaching (New York: Abingdon Press, 1957), p. 15.

anew."²⁵

Jones likes to quote E. Winston Jones who said, "It is worse than futile for the preacher to attempt to 'whip up' persons in behalf of righteousness on the basis of obligation and duty. No amount of scolding or fervid entreaty will avail anything."²⁶ Instead of "whipping up" the people, Jones sees the sermon as "the most important single redemptive force of the week in every community where there are Christian churches."²⁷

In a like manner, MacLennan asks this question of contemporary preachers, "Is it not a growing conviction with you, arising out of your pastoral visitation in homes or in your own study, that numbers of people are to be regarded not so much as sinners but as victims of disease?"²⁸ He says he is not trying to minimize the "fallenness" of man, but that it may be that the preacher should think more about the "psychologically and spiritually lost person." This new kind of person is an emergent of a city civilization, the consequence of its ferment. Then he states:

A human being does not need to suffer from a sense of guilt to feel lost; he may feel that he lives on

²⁵Ellion Jones, Principles and Practice of Preaching (New York: Abingdon Press, 1946), pp. 45-46.

²⁶Ibid., p. 29.

²⁷Ibid., p. 27.

²⁸David MacLennan, The Preacher's Primer (New York: Oxford University Press, 1950), p. 55.

Futility Street, where life is devoid of significant purpose.²⁹

He reminds ministers that a preacher is not a psychiatrist and is therefore not competent to deal with abnormal emotional and mental states, but nevertheless, a preacher himself does know what it means to have the Divine Physician help him. The preacher should remember that the deepest kind of suffering comes from man's deadliest foes: fear, anxiety, boredom, and loneliness. It is to these enemies that he must also speak. MacLennan thus reminds a preacher who would also be a good counselor,

As a Christian therapist, you will never declare the wrath of God toward all unrighteousness, as the apostolic preachers did, without offering, as they did, the sovereign remedy for sin, God's forgiveness mediated through Christ.³⁰

Another man who falls into this last category of seeing the power of guilt's motivation in a different manner is Tizard. He says that "there is no Gospel in condemnation nor in confronting a man with moral demands to which he knows that he will never be able to respond in his own strength."³¹ For Tizard the Gospel is the good news of God's promises made freely and unconditionally to man who will receive them in simple trust--promises that are utterly reliable. He feels that denunciatory preaching is not

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Ibid., p. 66.

³¹Leslie Tizard, Preaching "The Art Of Communication" (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959), p. 12.

necessary and generally comes out of the personality of the preacher.

However, Tizard does see a definite place in appealing to the conscience of his hearers. He is aware of the dangers of speaking to the consciences of people when in any congregation there are individuals who have over-sensitive or morbid consciences. However, he also realizes that the preacher must speak to "the rather tough and impenitent consciences" of the majority of his hearers.

The way to appeal to such individuals and utilize the motivation of guilt is not through denunciation. This type of preaching, like nagging, only produces a reaction of obstinancy. He feels there are two ways of arousing this sense of sin and guilt. "First, it may follow from the realization that something good, to which one should have responded, has been rejected. Therefore, the preacher needs less to denounce evil than to present a compelling picture of goodness."³² The second way to reach the conscience and use guilt as motivation is "by the realization of the consequence in the lives of others of what we are or what we have done."³³

In this particular discussion we have been looking at the ways in which contemporary preachers look at guilt as a motivating factor in religious experience. We have

³²Ibid., p. 91.

³³Ibid., p. 92.

seen how some stress the importance of "creating" this sense of guilt in order to awaken man from a false state of euphoria that will ultimately mean his destruction. Others see the power of guilt, but they already feel as if man is suffering from enough guilt and that the preacher is to use the guilt man now feels as a motivating to direct him to the "good news". In both cases man is guilty. In both cases the power of guilt as a motivating force is recognized. The difference lies in the opinion of the preacher as to whether or not he believes that man "feels" this guilt and as to how God looks upon this guilt in terms of grace and judgment.

Summary.

We have in general been attempting to understand how contemporary preaching interprets the meaning of guilt. The evidence of man's guilt is seen in his anti-social behavior even within the church. Wars, broken homes, racial strife, inner turmoil, and anxiety are looked to as evidences of man's lostness and estrangement from God.

The results of this guilt are many. For some preachers the results include mental illness and hurting other people. For other preachers the results of guilt mean that man has lost his true freedom which he had "in his father's house," and is now bound to his own desires. Likewise, the results of guilt mean that the preacher must now bring a word of judgment or rebuke to the offending

party. Man cannot be reassured of peace and comfort before he confronts his guilt and the God whom he has offended.

Many preachers see guilt as a motivating power in man's life. For some this power is lying dormant and must be stirred up by reminding man of the many ways he has failed to live up to his highest ideals. For others, man's conscience must be reached through his failure in society. However, in either case man must come to the place where he can say, "My guilt," before he can experience the grace and forgiveness of God.

Along this same line, there are other preachers who recognize that man already lives in despair, anxiety, and guilt. Man does not need words which stimulate guilt, but words of hope and life. For these preachers guilt is like a disease which needs the Great Physician's care. The preacher must present a picture of man's future and bring words of forgiveness. Nevertheless, both of these last groups still see the power of guilt feelings in human personality; they do not agree on how these feelings are to be used in presenting the Gospel.

Let us now turn to concepts found in current psychological theory and see some ways in which guilt is interpreted in this important discipline.

PSYCHOLOGICAL CONCEPTS

Guilt and the Unconscious.

The term "unconscious" is ambiguous and variously defined. One of the best definitions is found in English's Dictionary:

Unconscious: n. 1. A collective name for unconscious psychic activities-See unconscious (adj.). 2. (depth psychol.) a part or region of the psyche or person defined by the character of the activities ascribed to it. The activities are not open to direct conscious scrutiny but have dynamic effects on conscious process and behavior. Two classes of activities are generally postulated: formerly conscious processes (or the representative of those processes) that have been expelled from the realm of the conscious; and certain primordial and infantile wishes and impulses that have never gained access to the conscious realm. The expression the unconscious proper is sometimes employed to point up a distinction from the preconscious, whose contents are not at the time in the conscious but may be brought to consciousness without resistance. In later psychoanalysis the term id has largely replaced the unconscious and is somewhat differently defined, but the two are regularly interchanged.³⁴

Freud's position grew out of and rested upon two basic assumptions: psychic determinism and the reality of the unconscious. Psychic determinism refers to the fact that in the mind as in the physical world, nothing happens by chance or in a random way. Each psychic event is determined by the ones which preceded it. Discontinuity in this

³⁴Horace B. English and Ava Champney English, A Comprehensive Dictionary of Psychological and Psychoanalytic Terms (New York: Longmans, Green, 1958), p. 509.

sense does not exist in the mental life. However, we cannot talk about the fundamental hypothesis of psychic determinism without also seeing the significance of the second assumption: namely, the existence and significance of mental processes of which the individual himself is unaware or unconscious. As Brenner states:

It is precisely the fact that so much of what goes on in our minds is unconscious, that is, unknown to ourselves, that accounts for the apparent discontinuities in our mental lives. When a thought, a feeling, an accidental forgetting, a dream, or pathological symptom seems to be unrelated to what went on before in the mind, it is because its casual connection is with some unconscious mental process rather than with a conscious one. If the unconscious cause or causes can be discovered, then all apparent discontinuities disappear and the casual chain or sequence becomes clear.³⁵

According to Mullahy,³⁶ when Freud attempted to communicate his theory of the complicated mental life, especially the concepts of repression and the unconscious, he would use imagery that compared the unconscious system to a large ante-room which is occupied by various mental excitations. These crowded excitations are pushing forward to gain admittance into a second, smaller room like a reception room, which is occupied by consciousness. Between the two rooms there stands a doorman, the "censor", who scrutinizes the excitations seeking to gain admittance.

³⁵Charles Brenner, An Elementary Textbook of Psychoanalysis (Garden City: Doubleday, 1955), p. 4.

³⁶Patrick Mullahy, Oedipus: Myth and Complex (New York: Grove Press, 1948), p. 13.

Those which the doorkeeper disapproves of he turns back at the threshold or, if they slipped by him, drives out again. Consciousness, however, cannot see the mental excitations in the ante-room, so these which remain there are at the outset unconscious. The mental excitations which have been turned back by the doorkeeper are repressed. But even those which the censor permits to cross the threshold need not necessarily become conscious. They become conscious only if they attract the eye of consciousness. Hence, Freud calls the second chamber the preconscious system.

What does this theory of unconscious processes have to do with the study of guilt. Psychoanalysis has discovered that there are many people who seem to invite adverse happenings. The behavior of these people is so provocative that they are constantly being mistreated. They seem to incur accidents, lose money-and they may feel actually more at ease when they do than when they do not.

There are likewise people who seem to indulge constantly in self-recriminating activities and denunciations. They have feelings of great unworthiness which are often attached to special actions, impulses, thoughts, fantasies, masturbation, or death wishes concerning beloved persons. The recriminations are usually connected with an inclination to take the blame for any adverse happenings, ranging from the accidental death of a stranger as recorded in the newspaper to catching the measles.

Some of these individuals are hypersensitive to any disapproval by others or of a fear of being found out. They feel that people will be disappointed upon acquaintance with them. Even the counseling process can be like a court scene where they feel on trial.

What we have been describing are individuals who seem to have some existing guilt feelings of which they are not aware. Self-recrimination, hypersensitivity to any criticism, or any question of motivation are usually defenses against an offense which it is feared will be detected. A way of explaining this kind of behavior may be found in the theory of unconscious guilt feelings. Horney has stated:

. . . without knowing it the patient may suffer from deep unconscious guilt feelings; he has to atone for them with unhappiness and neurotic illness. His fear of the "super-ego" is so great that he prefers staying ill to recognizing that he feels guilty and why he feels so.³⁷

When speaking on this same subject Freud said people in whom this unconscious sense of guilt is dominant distinguish themselves under analytic treatment by exhibiting what is so unwelcome from the point of view of prognosis—a negative therapeutic reaction. In the normal course of events, if one gives a patient the solution of a symptom, at least

³⁷Karen Horney, New Ways In Psychoanalysis (New York: Norton, 1939), p. 234.

the temporary disappearance of that symptom should result; with these patients, on the contrary, the effect is a momentary intensification of the symptom and the suffering that accompanies it.

It often needs only a word of praise of their behavior during the cure, the utterance of a few words of hope as to the progress of the analysis, to bring about an unmistakable aggravation of their condition.³⁸

Freud points out that this type of person is suffering from an unconscious sense of guilt which favours illness with its attendant sufferings and handicaps. He also indicates that the problems raised by the unconscious sense of guilt and its relation to morality, education, criminality and delinquency are fruitful areas of investigation for psychoanalysts.³⁹

In psychoanalytic literature the term "guilt feeling" is used sometimes to indicate the response to an unconscious guilt; sometimes it is used synonymously with the need for punishment. Even though one cannot attribute all neurotic conditions to unconscious guilt feelings, they certainly do play a large part in the dynamics and origin of the neurosis. However one interprets the meaning of the theory of the unconscious, it is obvious that it plays an

³⁸Sigmund Freud, New Introductory Lectures On Psychoanalysis (New York: Norton, 1933), p. 150.

³⁹Ibid.

important role in people who exhibit an abnormal tendency to expiation, self-punishment, mortification and certain masochistic practices.

The theory of the unconscious likewise helps the psychiatrist in his diagnosis and treatment of a patient.

The psychologist is familiar with the fact that a profound and unconscious sense of guilt may manifest itself in consciousness and behavior as its very opposite—as an aggressive self-righteousness, as a projection upon others in constant fault-finding and moral consciousness . . . psychologists may be found to speak of guilt, not only when they mean an emotion-toned sense of having done wrong, but also for almost any sense of inadequacy in a particular situation, or for a sense of failure in meeting the demands of life generally, or for an inability to live up to certain ideals, however unrealistic and impractical.⁴⁰

What is even more difficult to handle is the desire of the person suffering from unconscious guilt to hold onto this form of punishment. In fact, as Freud describes:

Patients do not easily believe what we tell them about an unconscious sense of guilt. They know well enough by what torments (pangs of conscience) a conscious feeling of guilt, the consciousness of guilt, can express itself and so they cannot admit that they could harbor entirely analogous feelings in themselves without observing a trace of them. I think we may meet their objection by abandoning the term "unconscious feeling of guilt", which is in any case an incorrect one psychologically, and substitute for it a "need for punishment" which describes that state of things observed just as aptly.⁴¹

⁴⁰Victor White, O.P., "Guilt: Theological and Psychological," in Philip Mairet (ed.) Christian Essays in Psychiatry (New York: Philosophical Library, 1965), p. 160.

⁴¹Sigmund Freud, "The Economic Problem in Masochism," in his General Psychological Theory (New York: Collier Books, p. 197.

An investigation of unconscious guilt would not be complete without at least mentioning the work of Jung and Freud on what Jung called the "collective unconscious." In a recent work by Philip Rieff entitled Freud, The Mind of the Moralist, one discovers that Freud viewed guilt not only as a private matter, but had a favorite thesis that human beings had an ineradicable social heritage of guilt.⁴² Freud's opinion was that all religion is a reaction to the same great event which marked the beginning of civilization and which continues to haunt mankind and that is "the murder of the primal father."⁴³ Freud's exact words concerning this theory have been previously cited.⁴⁴

This particular theme was clearly discussed by Freud in his work Totem and Taboo but has more recently been expounded by one of his foremost popularizers, Theodor Reik, in his book entitled Myth and Guilt. Reik elaborates on Freud's original theory of parricide as the origin of guilt and the foundation of religion when he interprets the story of the Fall in Genesis as a myth in which the sin was the cannibalistic act of the brothers eating their father.

⁴²Philip Rieff, Freud, The Mind of the Moralist (New York: Viking Press, 1959), p. 275.

⁴³Ibid., p. 276.

⁴⁴Supra, p. 28

Reik's interpretation is based upon a theory that the tree of knowledge of good and evil actually referred to the eating of God because in primitive days the tree was a totem, representative of a god and the eating of the fruit of the tree was forbidden.⁴⁵ As a result of this interpretation of the Fall as the source of the collective unconscious guilt feelings, we have the following explanation:

1. Once man killed and devoured his God.
2. This deed was told in a later tradition in the language of tree totemism. God was presented in it as a sacred tree.
3. The main motive of this cannibalistic act of man was the wish to become God Himself-to take His place. This wish should be fulfilled by incorporation, by taking God into one's own body by eating Him.
4. The act marked an expression of utter rebellion against God.
5. God was jealous of man and afraid man could usurp His powers or magic.⁴⁶

Reik seriously believes and uses this interpretation of the myth in his personal counseling practice. He states, "It is very likely that whenever we now feel remorse, that deep, painful regret for having done wrong, the fear of cannibalistic retaliation is unconsciously experienced."⁴⁷ Reik likewise believes that the remnants of a feared punishment, whose nature became utterly alien to our conscious thoughts, still survive in many myths and in the

⁴⁵Theodor Reik, Myth and Guilt (New York: Braziller, 1957), pp. 130-42.

⁴⁶Ibid., pp. 146-47. ⁴⁷Ibid., p. 215.

fairy tales of our children, such as Hansel and Gretel, the Gingerbread Man, etc.⁴⁸

Jung began early to protest against the mechanistic, historically determined aspects of Freud's new concept of the unconscious, then so closely related to sexuality. Above all, he felt that the unconscious was not the encysted, repressed past of the individual pressing toward release, but a presently active part of the personality. Jung differed from Freud in stressing the present creative role of the unconscious in handling man's dilemmas.

Likewise, Jung differed from Freud by distinguishing between the personal and collective unconscious. Jung felt that man's mind as well as his body bears traces of his racial past; that he is predisposed to certain deep expectations, longings, and terrors rooted in prehistory over and above his experience as an individual. The representatives of the collective unconscious are called archetypes.

They (archetypes) are limited in number. Representational details vary with personal and cultural background of the individual, but the main outlines are universal. They are often personified, as in figures of the eternal compassionate mother or the devouring witch. They may take the form of action, like crossing a river, as the symbol of rebirth. They may be arithmetical and/or geometrical, as in

⁴⁸Ibid.

the mandala-a foursided figure with a central circle.⁴⁹

There is no doubt, however, that the Jungian analytical psychologist will definitely consider the collective unconscious as a factor in the genesis of guilt feelings.⁵⁰ For example, the archetype of "self" can unconsciously produce varying degrees of tensions with the ego's self-consciousness. There is strong evidence that this archetype of perfection is very operative in us and can act as a driving force which produces by contrast an intense sense of guilt in the very incomplete and imperfect ego.⁵¹

Concerning the preceding general discussion, White has said:

But it should not be supposed that the guilt-sense is always traceable to unrealistic idealism on the one hand, or to actual personal misdemeanors, conscious or unconscious, on the other. Jung has rendered a great service in pointing out the role of collective, inherited or other archetypal factors in the genesis of the sense of moral evil.⁵²

In our present discussion we have been attempting to understand some of the meanings placed on the concept of

⁴⁹Ruth Munroe, "Other Psychoanalytic Approaches," American Handbook Of Psychiatry (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1959), II, 1457

⁵⁰John Falcone, "A Study of the Theological and Psychistic Aspects of Guilt" (Unpublished dissertation S.T.L., St. Mary's University, 1951), p. 47.

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²White, op. cit., p. 167.

the unconscious in relation to a sense of guilt. We have investigated the general phenomenon of unconscious processes as well as comparing both the Freudian and Jungian interpretations of this aspect of man's mental life. Further in the paper we will evaluate this inquiry and present some observations that may be applied to preaching.

Guilt and the Superego.

In an earlier part of this study we discussed the concept of the superego as Freud developed it.⁵³ At this time we are interested in examining further expositions and evaluations of this concept as presented in current psychological theory.

According to Freud, the superego is the latest structure of the psychic apparatus to develop. It results from the resolution of the Oedipus complex. As a consequence, a new agency is instituted in the ego, containing the rewarding and punishing qualities of the parents. Freud reminds us⁵⁴ that he cannot tell us as much as he would wish about the change from parental function to the superego, partly because this process is so complicated and partly because he himself did not feel as if he really understood it. He therefore states in his New Introductory

⁵³Supra., p. 28 ff.

⁵⁴Freud, New Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis, p. 90.

Lectures:

You will have to be satisfied, therefore, with the following indications. The basis of the process is what we call identification, that is to say, that one ego becomes another, one which results in the first ego behaving itself in certain respects in the same way as the second; it imitates it, as it were takes it into itself.⁵⁵

We have now to mention another important activity which is to be ascribed to the super-ego. It is also the vehicle of the ego-ideal, by which the ego measures itself, towards which it strives, and whose demands for ever-increasing perfection it is always striving to fulfill.⁵⁶

Freud distinguished two kinds of guilt feelings: one, which develops as a reaction to external factors, known as the primary, social feeling of guilt; and another which develops under the influence of the superego. The primary feeling of guilt arises as a reaction to the fear of punishment when certain instinctual demands are not renounced. In discussing these two concepts Nunberg states:

For the small child, punishment is identical with loss of love; one is not punished if one is loved. This feeling of guilt stems from the fear of loneliness, for man dreads to be alone. This anxiety is an objective anxiety, and the fear of the loss of the libidinal tie to a real object, therefore, has a social character from the very beginning. Hence this feeling of guilt is also termed social anxiety. That feeling of guilt, on the other hand, which develops under the influence of the superego, is less dependent on external factors; it arises when there is no objective reason for anxiety, when there is no conflict with the environment.⁵⁷

⁵⁵Ibid.

⁵⁶Ibid., pp. 92-93.

⁵⁷Herman Nunberg, M.D., Principles of Psychoanalysis (New York: International Universities Press, 1955), p. 160.

Freud's development of the superego concept has led some psychologists to feel that "the sense of guilt based only on superego pressure is not really a sense of guilt but a sense of fear of one's own superego."⁵⁸ That is, the so-called sadistic superego--there does not seem to be a permissive superego--frightens the individual into a sense of guilt in the same way as a strick and overdemanding father frightens a child.

This kind of observation has led more and more psychologists to make a distinction between the conscience and the superego. Zillboorg observes:

The superego is not conscience for many reasons . . . The origin of the superego lies in the ambivalence and the fear of the child. And conscience is not made up of fear, but of regret for having done something wrong. The superego is by its nature unforgiving; it is the epitome of aggression and hatred. The superego cannot be quieted; it can only be pacified with direct or indirect "payment of kind", only to come up again and demand again and always the maximum penalty for acts conceived and perhaps never committed.⁵⁹

For these men the conscience is never nonrealistic, and it does not treat a fantasy, conscious or unconscious, as if it were a fact. Conscience regrets, where the superego is angry. Conscience glows with hope when its owner repents and makes amends. The superego never says: Go, and sin no

⁵⁸Gregory Zillboorg, "The Sense of Guilt," in William Bier (ed.) Personality and Sexual Problems (New York: Fordham University Press, 1964), p. 50.

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 51.

more; it merely says: Wait until I get you next time, or; it is all right to be sorry, but you must pay for it time and again until the end of your days.

Horney distinguishes her views over against Freud's concepts of the superego by stressing that for Freud the superego is a normal phenomenon representing conscience and morality while for her the equivalent "shoulds" and taboos of whatever kind and degree are altogether a neurotic force counterfeiting morality and conscience.⁶⁰ She likewise states that she and Freud have different therapeutic goals because of this difference of understanding concerning the interpretation of guilt in human behaviour. She says:

Freud can aim merely at reducing the severity of the superego while I aim at the individuals being able to dispense with his inner dictates altogether and to assume the direction of his life in accordance with his true wishes and beliefs. This latter possibility does not exist in Freud's thinking.⁶¹

Horney, therefore, feels that "It was one of Freud's gravest errors to regard the inner dictates (some of the features of which he had seen and described as superego), as constituting morality in general."⁶²

The above observation is born out when one considers Horney's view of real versus false guilt feelings. For her, real guilt feelings are constituted by the violation

⁶⁰Karen Horney, Neurosis and Human Growth (New York: Norton, 1950), p. 374.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 375.

⁶²Ibid., pp. 72-73.

of moral demands or prohibitions valid in the given culture, and that a feeling of guilt is the expression of a painful belief that such a violation has been made. The fact that two people in the same culture will have different feelings about the same act leads her to add that in "guilt feelings the painful belief concerns the violation of a norm which the individual recognizes as such."⁶³ Therefore, "the feeling of guilt may or may not be a genuine feeling. An important criterion as to the genuineness of guilt feelings is whether they are accompanied by a serious wish to make amends or to do better."⁶⁴

When an existential psychoanalyst discusses Freud's concept of the superego, he likes to point out how Freud in all his papers never spoke of guilt as such, but only of guilt feelings.⁶⁵ And that, consistent with such theories, "Freud expected psychoanalysis to liberate the patient from neurotic serfdom and allow him to return to his 'original naturalness'. Here he would no longer be hemmed in by feelings of guilt, but would be guaranteed the capacity for guiltless enjoyment."⁶⁶

This type of investigation into the interpretation

⁶³Horney, New Ways in Psychoanalysis, p. 237.

⁶⁴Ibid.

⁶⁵Supra., p. 44.

⁶⁶Medard Boss, Psychoanalysis and Daseinanalysis (New York: Basic Books, 1963), pp. 269-70.

and exposition of the superego concept has led McKenzie to say that "all this means that there is nothing in Freud which could account for a real sense of objective guilt. Nothing in Freud's concept of the Super-ego could lead us to the nature of ought or obligation."⁶⁷ The Freudian super-ego concept is a submission to authority either external, as in object anxiety, or internal, as in moral anxiety. The emotional basis is the fear of punishment or of losing the love of those that surround one, or of aggression toward those whom one loves. This entire superego concept on the pleasure principle of self-gratification. There is nothing here that corresponds to respect for principles of conduct which are rationally accepted as binding.

Guilt, Shame and Anxiety.

A further contribution of psychological theory to the interpretation of guilt is the relationship of anxiety and shame to guilt feelings. Perlman⁶⁸ discusses how the traditional approach to a study of shame and guilt dealt with differentiating cultures according to the criterion of

⁶⁷John McKenzie, Guilt: Its Meaning and Significance (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), p. 43.

⁶⁸Melvin Perlman, "Guilt and Shame: An Experimental Approach to the Study of Anxiety" (Unpublished dissertation Ph. D., University of Chicago, 1953), p. 9.

shame cultures or guilt cultures. A shame culture used external sanctions and a guilt culture used internal sanctions. Others, such as Freud and Erikson, have placed the function of shame and guilt within the psychosexual development of the child. Erikson couples shame with doubt as a primary conflict during the "anal stage" of development⁶⁹ while Freud places shame at the "phallic level" and especially related to and directed against exhibitionism and scopophilia.⁷⁰

An interest in this problem of the relationship of shame to guilt led Perlman to study the anxiety experienced in paratroopers. He discovered that anxiety was not a unitary concept, but that it differed qualitatively and quantitatively from what had been considered clinical anxiety. He discovered that with paratroopers two types of anxiety could be distinguished--one arising with guilt feelings and connected to the fear of destruction and death, which one might expect just before a jump; the other type of anxiety, however, arises from shame feelings and is connected with a fear of failure and the loss of self-esteem.

In the "Foreword" to a study by Piers and Singer on

⁶⁹Erik H. Erikson, Childhood and Society (New York: Norton, 1950), p. 134.

⁷⁰Otto Fenichel, The Psychoanalytic Theory of Neurosis (New York: Norton, 1945), p. 69.

shame and guilt, the following statement is made:

Both terms (shame and guilt) have been loosely used interchangeably although each stands for feelings derived from special early experiences that have influenced different psychological forces. Each is associated with a different intrapsychic pattern and probably contributes to a characterological type.⁷¹

In order to differentiate between these two psychological experiences, the following definitions of guilt and shame have been adapted from Piers; and as Perlman states, they "seem to have some general acceptance among practicing clinicians:"⁷²

Guilt: the result of a conflict between the ego and the superego; an internal tension generated by the transgression of the barrier or boundary erected by the superego (conscience, ethics, or moral code); these transgressions are usually, but not necessarily, in terms of aggressive or sexual impulses which are not acceptable to an internalized punishing image. In more general terms, guilt may be considered to arise whenever an individual becomes aware, either consciously or unconsciously, of doing something or an impulse to do something, which is not acceptable to, or violates the precepts of conscience.

Shame: the result of a conflict between the ego and the ego ideal; an internal tension which is generated by not reaching a goal, failure of an individual to actualize or approach his ego ideal (desired social role). In more general terms, shame may be considered to arise whenever an individual fails to meet external standards set by those whom the individual wants to please, or may be the failure, or threat of failure, to reach a goal, set by the individual's desired concept of himself.

⁷¹Gerhart Piers, M.D., and Milton Singer, Ph.D., Shame and Guilt (Springfield, Ill.:Charles C. Thomas, 1953), p.v.

⁷²Perlman, op. cit., p. 11.

As a result of the above definitions, the following observations can be made: (1) whereas guilt is the result of a tension between the ego and superego, shame is a tension between the ego and the ego ideal. The superego stems from an internalization of punishing, restrictive parental images, whether real or projected fantasies. The ego ideal represents the sum of positive identifications with parental images along with later identifications with parental surrogates and peers. "The 'social role' that an individual assumes in any given social situation, is largely determined by the structure of these developmentally later parts of his Ego-Ideal."⁷³

(2) Guilt anxiety arises from touching or transgressing a boundary erected by the superego, whereas shame arises when the goal is not being reached; (3) In guilt anxiety, the unconscious--irrational threat (danger situation) is that of punishment (castration, mutilation), whereas in shame anxiety, the threat is of abandonment, walking away in disgust; (4) The law of Talion is present in guilt but not in shame.⁷⁴

In keeping with the above discussion, it is possible to see how some people would be predisposed to experience shame rather than or in addition to guilt. An individual who experienced the fear of punishment from parental figures

⁷³Piers, op. cit., p. 14. ⁷⁴Ibid., p. 11.

would be more vulnerable to guilt than shame. The child who was always held up to ridicule or constantly compared unfavorably with peers and siblings would have an excessive concern over the problem of adequacy (failure) and thus would be more prone to shame anxiety.

Piers describes extreme cases when one could be referred to as having a guilt-ridden or shame-driven personality.

The guilt-ridden person is held back, because constricted in his character, his earlier and subsequent identifications tend to be with unconstructive images, inactivity, passivity or turning against the self are his fate. Guilt-engendered activity is at best restitution (sacrifice, propitiation, atonement) which rarely freed, but brings with it resentment and frustration rage which in turn feeds new guilt into the system. The shame-driven individual has better potentialities as to maturation and progress. His primary identifications may be healthier to start with, his later identifications may permit him to proceed from the original images to siblings, peers, and broader aspects of the social environment. If his ambitious drive is coupled with creativeness, it may actually lead to spontaneous curing of the original narcissistic wound. The guilt-ridden person introjects and expels ("extrojects"), the shame-driven identifies and compares. Whereas the shame-driven might be propelled beyond his natural limitations and break, the guilt-ridden as a rule will not even reach his potentialities.⁷⁵

An example of a shame-prone person would be an individual who might be willing to experience the feelings of guilt that would be engendered by cheating on an examination rather than suffer the more intolerable feelings that would arise were he to fail the examination. The

⁷⁵Ibid., pp. 28-29.

opposite would be true of the guilt-prone person. It is easily seen that escape from one effect can lead to the other.

We have just been looking at a further interpretation of the meaning of guilt as it relates to shame and anxiety. Psychological literature is rich with discussions on the meaning of the various forms of anxiety. Perhaps the best contemporary book which surveys the field is Rollo May's The Meaning of Anxiety. At another time we will have something more to say about the existential meaning of anxiety in terms of creativity and therapy.

Summary.

This division of our study has led us to an investigation of some ways in which current psychological theory interprets the meaning of guilt. The first interpretation reviewed was the place the unconscious plays in understanding guilt and its function in neurosis. Although the meaning of the unconscious may be variously defined, it is accepted generally that it plays a large part in the experience of neurotic and psychotic guilt.

In contrast to Freud, Jung sees the creative power of the collective unconscious. However, both Freud and Jung recognize that certain prehistorical events still affect the current behavior of man in regard to unconscious guilt feelings. It would thus appear that it is not possible to deal adequately with the interpretation of guilt in

human behavior without formulating some meaning to the influence of unconscious forces.

The second area of psychological interpretation of guilt centered in a further study of the superego and its influences. It was observed that Freud believed that the formation of the superego was a result of the Oedipal conflict, but that he also distinguished between two forms of anxiety in relationship to guilt. The first was social anxiety and the second moral anxiety. The one is external and other is internal.

Many current theories take issue with Freud concerning the formation and content of the superego. Some psychologists believe that a definite difference must be made between the superego and the conscience. They feel that the superego is restrictive and infantile which leaves no place for an adult, mature, rational morality. Likewise, the existentialists reject the idea that all psychologists can work with is guilt feelings when man is basically guilty.

Likewise, in a study of the relationship between guilt, shame and anxiety, it was discovered that not all anxiety is the same and even guilt and shame feelings can be differentiated according to whether the feelings stem from having broken some moral statute or failure to reach a goal.

SYNTHESIS AND APPLICATION

We will now turn to another section of our study where we will attempt to synthesize and apply some of the observations made thus far. The first area of concern in this category will be an evaluative comparison between the contemporary preaching formulations and current psychological theory in regard to the interpretation of guilt.

Comparison Between the Preaching and Psychological Interpretations.

One of the obvious differences between the way preaching formulations interpret guilt and psychological theory interprets it is in the general categories that are used in preaching. Preaching has a tendency to pronounce instead of interpret. For most preaching, guilt is guilt and there is little or no attempt to differentiate between the various kinds of guilt that might be present. For many preachers the evidences of guilt are the breaking of cultural and social moral regulations such as lying, cheating, strife, broken homes, etc. Since a great deal of the guilt feelings of any congregation are unconscious or non-rational, this approach can only lead to a very superficial handling of the problem.

This is also true in regard to the meaning of anxiety. For preaching, anxiety is an evidence or result of guilt. This anxiety is not interpreted as to its various

sources or meanings. In contrast to this, psychological theory recognizes many interpretations to anxiety. Some anxiety is "moral" in character while other anxiety is neurotic or social or existential. To identify all anxiety as the evidence of guilt is misleading, and can be a deterrent to genuine healing.

These broad categories likewise apply to the results of guilt as pointed to by preaching. Such categories as insanity and mental illness cannot be applied in total to the result of disobedience or sin. However, we are aware of the work of Biddle⁷⁶ and Mowrer⁷⁷ which attempt to identify guilt with sin and both of these to mental illness.

However, there is evidence among preachers that some of them recognize the dynamic factors in man's experience of guilt. For these men, the people in the pews are viewed as human beings already suffering from the tyranny of shoulds and demands. The job for these preachers is to help these individuals through the acceptance of the Gospel to face the tyrannical superego or the gnawing anxiety which results from attempting to be one's own lord, and to develop a maturing conscience with a maturing faith. These

⁷⁶W. Earl Biddle, Integration of Religion and Psychiatry (New York: Macmillan, 1955).

⁷⁷O. Hobart Mowrer, The Crisis in Psychiatry and Religion (Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1961).

men realize that guilt can put on a thousand disguises and not one of the disguises can be recognized as guilt-it may come out as pious sentiment or indirect hostility.

The psychological theory likewise recognizes the difference between the Freudian superego concepts, which preaching is often indicted as sanctioning or "whipping up", and a maturing conscience. This distinction is necessary in light of man's need and his existential identification with other people. However, it needs to be said that preaching could never deal with all of the projections which people place on a minister or sermon. That is, if a neurotic hears a sermon and needs to find something in it to make him feel unworthy, he will no doubt find it whether the preacher puts it there or not.

In the same manner, preaching cannot account for all of the unconscious factors associated with guilt feelings. However, preaching must become aware of ways of utilizing the unconscious in a constructive and not a destructive manner. It can revive destructive unconscious fantasies by stressing how "you" killed Christ. However, there are many areas yet unexplored where the positive function of the unconscious can help in the experience of grace and forgiveness.

A further comparison may be made in that the preacher, because of previous commitments, feels the need to either help convict man so that he feels guilty or at

least identify his guilt with a relationship with God. In doing this, guilt is used as a motivating power to give man impetus to either repent or seek help in his condition. Thus as Kennedy put it, "Many a man is saved by guilt."⁷⁸

In seeking a synthesis between these two approaches to the interpretation of guilt, we must include further study concerning the role of the preacher in the interpretation of guilt. It appears that even beyond what one believes, it depends on how the preacher sees the people as to how he will interpret to them the meaning of the Gospel in relation to their guilt. Whether anxiety or guilt is interpreted in a constructive or destructive manner has a great deal to do with the inner dynamics of the preacher.

Likewise, guilt as a motivating and creative factor from a psychological point of view needs to be investigated. This would, no doubt, lead to a further study of the meaning of existential guilt and its relationship to preaching formulations.

A third element which has been uncovered in this inquiry and which must be investigated if a synthesis is to take place is the meaning of judgment and responsibility in guilt. Preaching assumes a judgment of some kind, and it certainly seems to hold man responsible for all of his behaviour. It has little to say about compulsions and

⁷⁸Supra, p. 83.

unconscious drives. We must ask to what degree does current psychological theory see man as responsible and in need of moral direction even when the result of such direction is a heightened experience of guilt? These three areas of investigation will direct our future inquiry.

The Preacher's Personality and the Interpretation of Guilt.

When Phillips Brooks gave his Lectures On Preaching in 1877, he said that it was not hard to find a definition of preaching, for "Preaching is the communication of truth by man to men. It has in it two essential elements, truth and personality."⁷⁹ He also said the same thing in another way, "And preaching is the bringing of truth through personality."⁸⁰

He went on further to say that this definition of preaching likewise decrees what is involved in preparation for the ministry.

It must be nothing less than the making of a man. It cannot be the mere training to certain tricks. It cannot be even the furnishing with abundant knowledge. It must be nothing less than the kneading and tempering of man's whole nature till it becomes of such a consistency and quality as to be capable of transmission.⁸¹

What we have learned thus far about the interpretation of

⁷⁹Phillips Brooks, Lectures On Preaching (London: Macmillian, 1903), p. 5.

⁸⁰Ibid.

⁸¹Ibid., p. 9.

guilt in its neurotic and unconscious forms should make us aware of the fact that one's personality is "capable of transmission" not only of the wholesome aspects of the gospel but also of the unresolved and hidden conflicts of the "transmitter." Furgeson reminds us that Fredrick W. Robertson, who antedated Freud, observed in one of his sermons that it is more true to say that our opinions depend upon our lives than to say that our lives depend upon our opinions. Furgeson comments on Robertson's observation:

This truth, formulated before the psychology of unconscious motivation had become a generally accepted hypothesis, is a reminder to preachers (and the teachers of preachers) that the sermon is always the lengthened shadow of a man.⁸²

This kind of observation gives us a clue as to the origin of a great deal of unhealthy, non-productive, neurotic, guilt-stimulating preaching. If preaching involves the personality of the preacher and the sermon is really an extension of the preacher's own inner attitudes and frustrations, then it would follow that a neurotic minister or one who was burdened with a great many unresolved conflicts would unload these frustrations on his people through the sermon. Guntrip makes the following statement concerning denunciatory preaching:

Moral indignation has its roots in our struggles against evil in ourselves. We tend to wax hottest

⁸²Earl Furgeson, "Preaching and Personality," Pastoral Psychology, X (October 1959), 9.

against those evils towards which we ourselves have secret and repressed tendencies. Moreover, we often find a pleasure in moral indignation and denunciation that we would be slow to admit. It provides a socially permissible outlet for our own aggressive feelings.⁸³

In the study by Richard Niebuhr⁸⁴ on the advancement of theological education, it is suggested that there are at least ten types of persons who seek theological education. I am sure that those who have taught theological students will testify that the mature students, the guilt-ridden, the "holy Joes", the manipulators, the crusaders, and the "narcissistic self-pollinators" make different approaches to the subject matter of their courses and represent different levels of psychological and emotional maturity.

Furgeson suggests that there is a recognizable affinity between some homiletical forms and a psychological pattern of overt or covert hostility.⁸⁵ We have all heard sermons that appeared to be only a long row of hooks upon which one might hang his grudges. A sermon which majors in denunciation and condemnation without the balm and forgiveness of the gospel is most likely being used as a vehicle

⁸³Henry Guntrip, Psychology for Ministers and Social Workers (London: Independent Press, 1953), p. 72.

⁸⁴Richard Niebuhr, et. al., The Advancement of Theological Education (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957), Ch. VII

⁸⁵Furgeson, op. cit., p. 10.

for the preacher to give vent to his own frustrations.

In view of the fact that the gospel is supposed to be the good news of deliverance, what can account for the preacher's preference for carping criticism? How shall one account for a homiletical talent which turns to throwing stones instead of placing stones one on top of another to build something, except by assuming that the preacher's own unconscious, unassimilated hostility is intruding itself unfortunately into the sermon?⁸⁶

However, there are other ways in which a sermon may be used as an extension of the personality of the preacher. For some the sermon is a means of showing hostility, while for others it is a way of avoiding honest confrontation with people. One particular preacher who was having emotional difficulty centering around feelings and blocks he experienced while trying to prepare sermons, remembered one day during an analytic hour when he meant to say, "sermon composition" but tripped by his unconscious; said, "sermon competition." He says, "I became aware of the sermon as the critical point on which were centered many of my emotional conflicts."⁸⁷ He discovered that one of the causes of his excessive anxiety over sermon composition was his "use of the sermon primarily as a means of securing the approval of the congregation."⁸⁸

⁸⁶Ibid.

⁸⁷Harry B. Scholefield, "The Significance of an Educative Analysis for the Parish Ministry," in Wayne Oates, (ed.) The Minister's Own Mental Health, (New York: Channel Press, 1961), p. 320.

⁸⁸Ibid., p. 321.

He discovered that another cause for his anxiety was "the extent to which I used the sermon as a means of concealing my feelings rather than as a means of sharing them."⁸⁹

Thus, the sermon, like anything else that involves personal feelings and communication, takes on the protective coloration of the communicator. In discussing this very matter of how the sermon reflects the inner feelings of the preacher, Pearson says that the faithful minister will often spend a sleepless night asking himself:

"Lord, is it I? Am I preaching God or am I preaching myself? Do my sermons rise out of the strength of the gospel or are they powered only by my own disordered heart? Is the charter for my pulpit a neurosis, a habit, or a holy commission? Why do I preach? And if I ought to preach, why should I?"⁹⁰

One independent study has been conducted as an attempt to clarify some of the above observations.⁹¹ Barnes attempted an exploration of the manifestations of guilt as it may be seen in the Protestant minister's activity as a preacher. The study sought to discover the presence of guilt in the minister as it emerged from both his self-image and his perception of his vocational-image. Also, it sought to measure that guilt as it was projected to the aspects of his homiletical activity. Thus Barnes studies

⁸⁹Ibid.

⁹⁰Pearson, op. cit., p. 15.

⁹¹Charles Barnes, "Some Aspects of Guilt Related to the Preaching of Protestant Ministers" (Unpublished dissertation Ph. D., Boston University School of Theology, 1962).

the sermons of the ministers involved in order to detect how the guilt feelings were revealed in their preaching.

Out of the number of ministers invited to participate in the study, forty-five indicated their willingness to take part. These forty-five represented seven different denominations with an average church membership of 362.

For the purposes of the study, guilt was conceptualized in terms of negative self-evaluation which has occurred as a consequence of the minister giving acknowledgement to the fact that his behavior both as a person and in the role expectation image is at variance with the given image or value to which he has assigned himself and to which he therefore felt obligated to conform. Of the ministers interviewed, 83.9% of the respondents offered some precise and explicit statement in support of this definition.

In other words, the ministers felt guilty because they could not reconcile in their own minds the difference between their own self-image and the vocational-image which they felt the people expected them to fulfill and which they themselves accepted. Barnes hypothesized that this guilt reaction would manifest itself in the sermons of the ministers involved. The following statement is given by Barnes as the findings and summary of his analysis of the contents of these ministers sermons:

The findings of the analysis were tabulated under three major areas, a) the manifest recurrent theme, b) the relation of the themes to the total pattern of homiletical

activity, and c) the psychological interpretation of the emotional significance of such themes.

First, the manifest themes were:

A. Man's Corruption, Sin, Weakness	87.1%
B. Moral Laws, Commandments, Demands	80.7%
C. Need for Forgiveness, Reconciliation	70.9%
D. Jesus as the Ideal, Model, Example	61.3%
E. Judgment of Religion	58.0%

That is, 87.1% of the themes clustered around the imperfections of man, 80.7% of the men studied mentioned themes which were a statement of the expected ideal as related to the religious ethic, 70.9% of the men included sermons which attempted to deal with broken or unsatisfactory inter-personal relationships, while 61.3% portrayed Jesus as the ideal and thereby implied an encounter with the actuality of less than Christ-like behavior, and 58.0% of the ministers listed themes expressive of a social judgment on existing patterns of life and community.

Secondly, the stated themes reflected the tension between the ideal and the actual, the sense of failure and shame, and an implicit acknowledgement of guilt as a reality in the presentation of the communication of feeling through the sermon.

Thirdly, the findings supported the hypothesis that the sermon content was critical and not supportive; that the "super-ego" factor is sufficiently intense to demand a consistent preoccupation of the preacher with the ideal expectations and norms of the religious ethic; and, the themes reflected a negative and critical attitude toward the listeners, providing a base for the cycle of hostility.⁹²

This kind of analysis indicates that the minister places upon the people the same kind of impossible expectations which make him feel guilty. Thus the cycle of hostility from parishioner expectations of the pastor to pastoral expectations of parishioners continues.

⁹²Ibid., p. 99.

However, before the findings of the study were known, the ministers were asked how they felt their personalities were involved in their preaching. They usually had one of three responses: the first group, although rather broad in their description, could see a relationship of personal conflicts in their preaching. The second class seemed to be moderately threatened and suggested that while they were assured of the involvement of factors at such a point they were unable to suggest a precise response. A third category comprised the ministers who felt the inquiry sufficiently threatening to substitute holy irrelevant answers, even after repeated inquiry.⁹³

The ministers in this study seem to have accepted the expectations of people about whom Schloerb speaks when he says that some people do not want a minister to summon them to action, but rather they feel that the preacher's function is to make articulate the conscience of the community. They affirm that it is his task to hold the ideal before the people and to remind them of the ways in which they are falling short of this ideal. His is the proclamation of the perfect way of life-the way of holiness-and if he has warned people about falling short from this

⁹³Ibid., p. 105.

ideal, he has performed his task.⁹⁴

Examples of the guilt which a young preacher feels for not living up to his vocational ideal is apparent. It is also apparent that this guilt which he experiences causes him to react in a hostile fashion toward the parishioners because he sees them as the ones who are structuring this image that he cannot fulfill.

Thus, we have come to one of the most important areas of our research with regard to the interpretation of guilt. It has already been recognized that different preachers whom we have been studying see their function differently in keeping with their view of the people. This present study suggests that the reason for the difference is due to their own unresolved and hidden hostility. We are to love others as we love ourselves, but if we hate ourselves, we will no doubt communicate that hate to others. Some suggestions as to the resolution of this conflict will come in the third section of our study.

Guilt as a Motivating Factor in Human Behavior.

In our present discussion on the synthesis and application of the interpretation of guilt, we have discovered that it was necessary to investigate at least three areas. The first of these was the relationship of the personality

⁹⁴Rolland W. Schloerb, The Preaching Ministry Today (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1946), p. 76.

of the preacher to the problem of guilt. The second area which we will now consider is the psychological understanding of guilt as a motivating factor in human behavior. We have already seen how preaching looks upon the power of guilt as a means of leading man to find a meaning in salvation. We are now concerned to see if there is a place in current psychological formulations for this same kind of expression.

We have already observed how many psychologists disagree with Freud that guilt feelings are a symptom of infantile regression and a submission to the superego. The existentialists have stressed the importance of the creativity of real guilt. DeYoung has summarized the difference between the psychological and theological points of view on this matter as follows: "Psychology tends to see guilt in terms of pathological potential whereas Christian theology, while not blind to the pathological potential, tends to see much more creative potential to guilt."⁹⁵

However, it is not simply theology that sees creative potential in guilt. Boisen, after making a thorough study of both the theological and psychological aspects of mental health and religion has concluded that even something

⁹⁵Quintin DeYoung, "A Study of Contemporary Christian Existential Theology (Kierkegaard and Tillich) and Modern Dynamic Psychology (Freud and Sullivan) Concerning Guilt Feelings" (Unpublished dissertation Ph.D., University of Southern California, 1959), p. 244.

like worry is not an evil in itself but is rather an attempt at reorganization which is analogous to fever or inflammation in the body. He says that "the real evil is the failure to grow, the failure to attain one's true objectives in life."⁹⁶

Thus, worry represents an awareness that something is wrong and indicates that an effort is being made to do something about it. Boisen believes that the man who thinks he has committed the unpardonable sin is likely to get well unless there are complicating factors. However, the man who does not get well is the one who withdraws from real life into the land of fantasy and easy-pleasure-taking or who maintains his self respect by blaming others for his difficulties. He, therefore, concludes;

The doctrine that the conviction of sin is the first step in the process of salvation seems, therefore, true to facts. The recognition of difficulty and the desire to do something about it are preconditions of growth and achievement.⁹⁷

But what is this "conviction of sin"? Niebuhr has said that the manner in which orthodoxy speaks to man's predicament is by defining sin as man's severance from God and from society as the result of a basic severance from himself. The source for this has been man's

⁹⁶Anton Boisen, Religion in Crisis and Custom (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1955), p. 207.

⁹⁷Ibid., p. 208.

"incontrovertible . . . refusal to understand himself."

Wayne Oates puts it this way:

The anxiety of sin is the reaction of a person being lost, to having lost his way, his meaning, his purpose, his raison d'être. Likewise, his meaning, his purpose, his raison d'être arise from his sense of community with and his acceptance by those whom he loves, to whom he is devoted, and from whom he gains his resources for living. The anxiety of sin and condemnation, therefore, arises from estrangement and alienation from one's total field of interpersonal relationships—to his community, to his God and to himself. His sinful acts are both caused by and contributed to by widening chasms of his work group, his God, and his concept of himself.⁹⁸

Therefore, as Barnes has suggested, "guilt is to be seen at the very points where man realizes that he has a sense of responsibility for the alienation of such broken relationships. To make this acknowledgement is to come under the conviction of sin."⁹⁹

It is this very anxiety which accompanies the broken relationships that acts as the impetus in motivating man to do something about it. Just as for Kierkegaard, the experience of anxiety and despair can lead a man to saving grace, so the Christian doctrine of sin is a doctrine of the dialectical relation of human despair to human hope, and as such it is buttressed by modern psychology.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸Wayne Oates, Anxiety in Christian Experience (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1955), p. 68.

⁹⁹Barnes, op. cit., p. 43.

¹⁰⁰Seward Hiltner, "Pastoral Psychology and Constructive Theology," Pastoral Psychology, IV (June 1953), 25

Thus, as man attempts to be his own lord and disregards his own lack of self-sufficiency, he experiences anxiety and guilt. However, this same experience now leads him to seek a form of salvation and forgiveness. It is at this point that the relevance of preaching in interpreting to man both his predicament and the possible help for his problem is so very important.

This observation also says that every man has some sense of responsibility or commitment. From these commitments he determines his moral values. "Moral values are our perception of, and our loyalty to, those qualities of mature personality that are necessary if we are to sustain constructive and not destructive human relationships."¹⁰¹

Guntrip reminds us that many patients often ask the question as to whether or not psychoanalysis has a destructive effect on moral values. The patient may feel that this is true because he is able to confess whatever he feels without receiving condemnation from the therapist. However, as Guntrip says,

The answer to these doubts and fears is quite definite. The patient's sense of moral values must not be weakened or undermined. The fact that he feels guilty about his anti-social trends is part of his motivation for wanting to change them. If he could not feel guilty, psychotherapy would become virtually

¹⁰¹Henry Guntrip, Psychotherapy and Religion (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957), p. 178.

impossible. The capacity for feeling guilty about hurting other people is part of a socialized personality and in itself a mature thing.¹⁰²

Helping man to experience guilt over the right things and interpreting this experience for him so that it becomes creative and leads to new growth is the responsibility of both the preacher and psychologist. Guilt is present in human life. The capacity to experience guilt is necessary for human relationships to be meaningful. The motivation of guilt can be used constructively to lead man to new relationships with others, God and himself. Let us now make some general observations as to how what we have discussed may be applied to the preaching of judgment and responsibility.

The Preaching of Judgment.

From our research it seems evident that "all of us are at the same time guilty and obdurate. We all experience guilt feelings, and we also continually seek to escape from them, not by the pardon of God but by the mechanism of self-justification and repression of conscience."¹⁰³ It is not a question of whether or not man is to feel guilty, but rather toward whom this guilt is felt and whether or not it has become mature and creative instead of

¹⁰²Ibid., p. 179.

¹⁰³Paul Tournier, Guilt and Grace (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1962), p. 158.

of infantile and neurotic.

To experience freedom is to experience potentiality and the fear of non-being. Such possibilities are always accompanied by dread, anxiety and guilt. Dread is a result of the dialectic between freedom and necessity, between infinite and the finite. Man's estrangement from himself and others and his possibilities of freedom provide the condition for dread and guilt. Man has come to despair over where his own freedom will lead him—he constantly lives between the actual and potential, between the real and the ideal. As soon as man turns toward God, he recognizes the difference between the infinite and the finite—the is and the ought. When this happens, guilt as an expression of the pathos of existence is increased.¹⁰⁴

When Niebuhr evaluates man's dilemma he sees that man complicates his predicament because, feeling inadequate because of the contingencies of life, he tries in and of himself to be adequate. The result is both pride and guilt; or put in another way, man tries to usurp God's role in various ways, and in this impossible dilemma of the finite attempting to be infinite, limited, limitless, there arises the ontological guilt which is expressed as failure and inadequacy. Man is, therefore, guilty and anxious both

¹⁰⁴Søren Kierkegaard, The Concept of Dread (Princeton: University Press, 1944), p. 96.

because he tries to be what he is not, and because he fears through a possible resignation to the actuality of his inability, that he may cease to be a self at all.¹⁰⁵

Judgment, therefore, does not originate in preaching any more than does the origin of guilt. Many psychologists are as concerned about ultimate meaning and values as are preachers. In fact, some schools of psychotherapy today place a great deal of stress on the importance of "meaning" in life and insist that it is the psychotherapist's place to help his patient adopt a set of personal values.¹⁰⁶

However, the clergyman and the psychotherapist must know the difference between true and false values-between real and neurotic self-judgments. DeYoung warns clergymen about not knowing the difference between neurotic and normal guilt. He says:

Certainly more sophistication on the part of clergymen with respect to the pathology of guilt would save them from confusing morbid guilt reactions with genuine spiritual humility. The psychodynamically oriented clergyman would recognize many religious practices as symptoms of say, obsessive-compulsive disorders.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵Reinhold Niebuhr, The Self and The Dramas of History (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1955).

¹⁰⁶Two examples of this approach may be found in the writings of Victor Frankl, Man's Search for Meaning (New York: Washington Square Press, 1963); and Charlotte Buhler, Values in Psychotherapy (Glencoe, N.Y.: Free Press, 1962).

¹⁰⁷DeYoung, op. cit., pp. 285-86.

It is true that many neurotics in the church are often thought of as the most spiritual. We are all aware of persons within the church who are really dominated by unconscious guilt and thereby need to "atone" for their unworthiness through expiatory service. The preaching of judgment for these people only helps them to perpetuate their illness. But their illness is not the result of the healthy preaching of judgment.

However, as we have discovered, the neurotic and unhealthy sides of guilt are not the only sides. Again, as DeYoung suggests, if the psychoanalytical account of guilt were the only and all-sufficient explanation, then Christian theology would have to forsake its historic position with respect to sin, especially the doctrine of atonement. Likewise, the Christian psychotherapist would have to either lead a schizophrenic existence or be extremely careful not to talk about human sinfulness and guilt.¹⁰⁸

Nevertheless, it is not a matter of choosing preaching over counseling--theology or psychology, even if it may appear this way if one takes a strictly psychoanalytic approach to the subject. The psychoanalytic view reduces man to being a victim of his inheritance or developmental experience. Such a view carried to its logical end, ends in determinism and actual denial of any significant or

¹⁰⁸Ibid., p. 288.

definable concept of the individual. Furthermore, such a view undermines the concept of moral responsibility, for in the last analysis no individual has any control over the inherited or developmental factors.

However, it is this very objection to the general psychoanalytic approach that has caused existentialism to feel that traditional ways of handling guilt have contributed considerably to the lack of reality and the sense of illusion in much psychotherapy. This approach may also tend to confirm the patient's neurosis, in that it implicitly opens the way for him not to take his guilt seriously and to make peace with the fact that he has indeed forfeited his own being. Thus, many contemporary psychotherapists take man's guilt, freedom, responsibility, and meaning in life quite seriously. They recognize that man is forced to operate within the bounds of freedom and responsibility-between pan-determinism and "free-willism."

One thing that both informed preachers and psychotherapists are concerned about is the preaching of judgment which is really no more than the dogmatic presentation of moralisms. As Tournier has stated:

All the indictments of the psychologists against the Christian Churches are in reality aimed, not at the biblical revelation but at moralism--that moralism which is radically opposed to it, the moralism which tried to stone Jesus, as the Mosaic Law prescribed (Num. xv. 35), for violation of the Sabbath when he cured a man on that day (Mk. iii. 1-6); a moralism which crucified Him. For, in their turn, psychotherapists are

daily discovering in their patients the crushing weight of moralism and of social conformism and its taboos.¹⁰⁹

Therefore, when the preaching of judgment takes place as it should it is as if a strong wind of liberty has blown, the wind needed by all those neurotics who are paralyzed by the taboos inculcated in them by their upbringing. The sense of guilt is not erased; it is shifted from its false infantile object to the real problem: dependence on God and God alone. This adult consciousness of responsibility before God gives release from moralism and false guilt feelings.¹¹⁰ Tournier goes on to say that it is the shift of infantile to adult guilt that likewise brings release in psychoanalytic treatment. It is the rejection of moralism, the tracking-down of taboos and fear of human judgment so that the patient can discover his genuine convictions, his own individuality, harmony with himself and his inward call.

We have suggested that much contemporary psychological theory, particularly that of the existential school, takes man's guilt seriously. This is no less true in regard to the biblical revelation. The Bible often speaks with great severity concerning the wrath of God and possibility of judgment upon men. The concept of judgment has been renewed in the contemporary theology of Barth, Brunner, and Tillich. Brunner speaks of the wrath of God as part of

¹⁰⁹Tournier, op. cit., p. 124. ¹¹⁰Ibid., p. 123.

His personality. You cannot have a personal God who loves without also having a God who can show anger. To want God's love without his wrath and holiness is to deprive His love of its depth and meaning.¹¹¹ It is acknowledged that even in human affairs the person who cannot become angry cannot truly love. The one who passes over treachery, infidelity, and breach of confidence cannot be a true friend and cannot be faithful to himself.

Jacobsen, in his research on the interpersonal concept of guilt and forgiveness, as found in the work of Sullivan and Brunner, makes the following comment concerning Brunner's understanding of God's wrath:

God's holiness means more than is ordinarily meant by divine righteousness and justice. It is His willing himself unconditionally, desiring to be God and Lord of all, yielding his honor to no other . . . God's wrath against anyone who resists Him springs from His holiness, which, Brunner suggests, could be called His infinite divine self-respect, without which His love would be nothing more than sentimentality.¹¹²

There have been many attempts to understand the meaning of God's wrath or anger toward sin. Usually a mistake is made in projecting on to God some of our own human pettiness and revenge. Some have attempted to deal with

¹¹¹Emil Brunner, The Mediator (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1947), p. 444 ff.

¹¹²Sverre T. Jacobsen, "The Interpersonalism of Guilt and Forgiveness in the Writings of Harry Stack Sullivan and Emil Brunner" (Unpublished dissertation Th.D., Princeton Theological Seminary, 1959), p. 143.

this issue by making judgment and wrath a kind of natural law and thus remove any personal involvement with it. C. H. Dodd attempted to do this but by in large failed to convince New Testament scholars. It likewise is not sufficient to follow some psychological speculations that the wrath of God is simply the projection of a ruthless superego.

However, we believe that all of the above possibilities concerning the meaning of God's judgment are sometimes true when it comes to our subjective feelings. But it is not possible to reduce the judgment of God simply to subjective feelings. After studying this same question, McKenzie comes to the following conclusion:

Religious guilt feelings, then, or religious anxiety, cannot be explained in purely psychological terms. Religious guilt is not merely a "sense of wrongdoing", or an "emotional attitude" involving emotional conflict, but a ruling principle of the personality from which stem our particular sins. That ruling principle involves the turning away from God (Unbelief), resistance to His love and will (hubris); it puts the ego where God should be at the centre of man's life; that concupiscence or distorted libido which exploits others for one's own personal pleasure or gain. That is one side of guilt. The other is that the sense of anxiety which accompanies all guilt feelings, is an anxiety or an anxious longing for the lost ideal or the lost loved object.¹¹³

Bishop Kennedy gives us a clue concerning the preaching of judgment that is helpful when he suggests that preachers spend too much time bewailing certain social acts which are only revelations of something wrong down much

¹¹³ McKenzie, op. cit., p. 152-53.

deeper. He comments that men often drink because they are frightened; they steal because they are insecure; they carouse because they have not learned what decent recreation is. Thus, he admonishes the preacher:

Let us not waste our time shouting our imprecations at such as these to the applause of every churchman who never yielded to any of these evils because he was never tempted. But if we are to be true prophets of God, then let us find the causes for such behavior and center our criticism there.¹¹⁴

Kennedy is only saying that the preaching of judgment must be to the point and meaningful if it is to be helpful. Stimulating false guilt is never productive of wholeness or newness of life. However, the judgment of God comes not only through the proclamation of the preacher but, as we have already seen, is built into the experience of life itself. There is a sense in which judgment is the reaping of what is sown. Bartlett expresses this idea very well when he says that in our pastoral relationships we will look many times upon the sheer reality of judgment in human life. It is that state when harmony and personhood are threatened. He says,

Judgment is to live by the sensual until we become increasingly satiated and decreasingly satisfied; then we must try to increase the sensual only to discover that it accelerates the downward spiral. Judgment is to live an ever-contracting life, drawing in and trusting no one until at last we trust least of all

¹¹⁴Kennedy, op. cit., p. 165.

ourselves. . . It is the distorted vision, the bound affection, the broken relationship, the servitude to appetite, the point at which we live as we do, not because we may but because we must.¹¹⁵

However, regardless of how the judgment comes, true judgment always comes as an agent of mercy. God comes "not to condemn the world but that the world might be saved." (John 3:17). The repeated theme of the scriptures is grace and forgiveness. It constantly speaks of a love that is great enough to care what happens to a man. It speaks of a relationship between man and God wherein there is struggle and action. It compares the relationship between God and man to that of a loving husband and his concern about his unfaithful wife. The severity of God can only be understood if one is aware of His ultimate aim. He aims "not to suppress the arrogant sinner, but to arouse his sense of guilt, and so to humble him. thereby opening for him the way of grace."¹¹⁶

Perhaps an analogy can be made between the purpose of the preaching of judgment and ministering to an alcoholic. Four key concepts are discussed by Tiebout¹¹⁷ as important in understanding the needs of the alcoholic. These concepts

¹¹⁵Bartlett, op. cit., pp. 86-87.

¹¹⁶Tournier, op. cit., p. 142.

¹¹⁷Harry Tiebout, M.D., "Alcoholics Anonymous -An experiment of Nature", Pastoral Psychology, XIII (April 1962), 45-62.

are, "hitting bottom," "humility," "surrender", and "ego reduction." Hitting bottom comes to the alcoholic when he is shaken, desperate, sunk in despair and the future offers no hope. At this point he wants help.

Nevertheless, hitting bottom is only half of the job, the real battle is to stay there in humility. Tiebout says that as a consequence of these two aspects, which the A.A. uses in treating alcoholics, two clinical facts came into view. The first has been termed surrender; the second is the need for ego reduction. The view of surrender in this case is like that of the existentialist.

They view surrender as a letting go of control and presume that such dropping of the reins will permit greater spontaneity and naturalness and a greater sense of being a person. They occasionally use the word surrender and apparently are well aware that every individual needs to forego his place as pilot and boss and accept the lesser role of just being human. The note of humbleness is again being heard.¹¹⁸

Ego reduction cannot be understood if the person thinks of the traditional Freudian concept of ego as part of the division of the psyche into id, ego and superego. This concept of ego is that which develops as a departure from primary narcissism and represents the infantile aspect of the Freudian ego. It is important here to know the difference between narcissism and mature love. Narcissism has to do with egotism or the "big ego," while mature love finds

¹¹⁸Ibid., p. 49.

its expression in healthy self-esteem.

Tiebout feels that a conversion occurs when the individual hits bottom, surrenders, and thereby has his ego reduced. However, the stability of his salvation "lies in keeping that ego reduced, in staying humble."¹¹⁹

It is obvious that all of the above considerations cannot be directly applied to the preaching of judgment. However, just as in the case of the alcoholic, so in man in general there is a place for hitting bottom, giving up the illusion of being one's own boss and lord, surrendering to the realities of being human and reducing the infantile narcissistic claims of omnipotence. The preaching of judgment and personal responsibility, when done in keeping with the best of psychological knowledge which we have investigated, can help man face this side of his life and hence to find his "salvation".

Conclusions.

The research thus far has disclosed the contributions of several schools of psychology to the meaning and interpretation of guilt. Each of these contributions has been applied to the function of preaching in terms of man's search for a healthy and constructive relationship with himself, others and God. The following discussion is meant to underscore some of the specific contributions made by

¹¹⁹Ibid., p. 55.

each school to this section of the study.

Freudian. The general understanding of the nature of unconscious processes has been greatly enhanced by the work of Freud. This concept should affect preaching in at least two areas. The first area deals with the interpretation of obvious, conscious events. A great deal of preaching, as has already been observed, deals only with surface relationships and contemporary behaviour problems. It seldom asks the question, "What is this person trying to accomplish through this type of action?" It likewise seldom speaks to the compulsive element in man which makes him act the way he does.

Judging only surface reactions both misleads the parishioner in terms of stimulating guilt over the overt action rather than helping him to see its meaning and helps the parishioner to feel as if he can manipulate God, the church and society by emphasizing only the external control of behaviour.

An obvious criticism of this observation would be that since no one is completely cognizant of unconscious motivation and dynamics, preaching is meaningless. On the contrary, preaching has an important function in helping the parishioner to focus in on his real problems and at the same time allowing him, in an atmosphere of grace and forgiveness, to explore his depth relationship with God and others. It must also be said that even though there may be

unconscious processes behind a conscious act, the response to the present act is important and necessary. It is through allowing the unconscious to become conscious that true meanings are discovered. This concept, therefore, ought to help the preacher in establishing both limits and possibilities for meaningful communication.

A second contribution of the Freudian school which preaching must take notice of is the meaning of the superego. Even though this concept as such is seldom if ever discussed in homiletical literature, the negative function of the superego is utilized by preachers all the time. Even if the sexual character of the oedipal struggle is denied, the fact that aggression and repressed guilt feelings are experienced during this time in a child's life is certain. By not taking notice of this concept, preaching reinforces false and negative guilt feelings which only end up being repressed and therefore are never really worked through. Such experiences take place every year at summer camps for children and teenagers when they are asked to begin serving God through complete obedience to adults, rejection of any sexual thoughts and denial of any aggressive feelings toward parents or others. A preacher who took seriously this particular contribution of Freudian thought would understand why these pledges are never fulfilled and why the children that make them soon drop out of active participation in the church. The alternative for the

young person in this situation is to become like the Pharisees and deny the reality of unacceptable feelings.

The preacher should also recognize that the contributions of psychology have exposed the negative, infantile aspect of this experience of the psyche. Even though the superego may be trained by religion to help "whip up" people and keep them under control, this authoritarianism is not the same as an adult conscience. The minister must, therefore, learn to appeal to the "adult" side of each person and through a positive strengthening of the ideals of the ego allow the individual to determine his inner values and goals as a maturing person. Preaching, therefore, must neither disregard the guilt feelings which stem from a tyrannical superego nor must it reinforce its power through a negative use of religious practices. The goal of preaching is a free man in honest response to God. This includes the experience of judgment and grace-obedience and forgiveness.

Neo-Freudian. Among the many contributions of the Neo-Freudians to the meaning of guilt, the three which are the most important for preaching deal with the infantile origin of guilt, the function of neurotic defenses and the interpretation of current cultural demands in terms of authority and freedom.

It has already been suggested that a knowledge of the work of the Neo-Freudians, particularly that of Klein

and Ericson, would be of great help to preachers speaking on the themes of the Fatherhood of God and "Except you become as a little child you cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven." A great deal of preaching speaks naively about human relationships, particularly those of children to parents. The application of these concepts would leave the parishioners with more understanding and less guilt concerning the angry and aggressive feelings of infants and parents toward each other. It would reveal more about the nature of man's needs as a person and how these needs are expressed in microcasm in the infant. No longer would a crying infant be used as an example of original sin. Selfishness, self-love and the fear of non-being would not be categorized together as the expressions of a depraved nature. An understanding of a child's despair and satisfaction could help the parishioners to participate meaningfully in a great deal of the scripture which pictures God as our benefactor and shepherd. The communion service would take on a special significance.

The contribution of Karen Horney to the interpretation of guilt and preaching involves her understanding of the defences of the neurotic. Anyone who has dealt with people in the church is aware of how religion can be used as a neurotic defence. Her observations are both encouraging and discouraging to preaching. They are discouraging because the preacher knows that regardless of what he says,

the neurotic individual can twist it to meet his own needs. At the same time, the preacher can apply these insights to keep him from deliberately adding to the neurotic's defenses and his desire for glory and power.

The wholesale reenforcement of "shoulds" and the drive for perfection along with an accompanying self-re-
crimination attitude only forces the neurotic deeper into his shell of protection. At the same time, the preacher can take heart in the fact that he cannot possibly avoid confronting the neurotic with claims of the Gospel which might be misinterpreted. On the contrary, through a healthy proclamation of the Gospel, preaching may help the neurotic see his real difficulty as a lack of basic security and thereby help free him from his protective defences. By recognizing his true guilt, the neurotic may be able to surrender his illusory false guilt. An application of the principles which Horney has pointed out would help the preacher to see that true morality does not come from submission to inner dictates nor is it whipped into action through threats, but rather comes through rational commitment and spontaneous growth.

This last concept corresponds to Fromm's contribution to preaching in his discussion of the function of authority and freedom. Our previous discussion of this contribution outlined how he felt that only a humanistic ethic and personal acceptance of an inner authority could free

man to be a person. We will later point out how the acceptance of external authority is not the same as having an infantile conscience. However, preaching often uses the pressure of external authority to both control the behaviour of others and to assure itself of not losing an audience. This approach only leads to leader deification and perpetuates the infantilism of the listeners.

Interpersonal. It is easy to see how the "bad me" concept of Sullivan could be exploited in preaching. However, the Interpersonalist theory of relationships should help the preacher interpret the meaning of guilt in the Scripture. According to many theologians, a person only sins and therefore experiences genuine guilt when he has offended a person. Things or objects may be used but real guilt comes through broken relationships. This concept applied to preaching would help parishioners gain an understanding of forgiveness and communion as personal expressions of relationship rather than ritual observances.

Although the previous discussion of shame and guilt was not identified as stemming from any particular school of psychology, even though it uses the concepts of Freudian thought, the results of this study certainly relate to the whole meaning of interpersonal goals and relationships. It was discovered that guilt comes from a conflict between the ego and superego while shame stems from a conflict between the ego and ego ideal. In other words, a person feels

guilty when he is condemned by his own intrinsic need for subjective assurance or personal integrity. Shame is a sense of embarrassment which a person experiences when he feels that he has offended certain demands or mores which he is expected to keep in order to experience acceptance. The preacher must determine to what extent he is using shame and guilt for manipulation and to what extent he is proclaiming a Gospel which will inevitably confront man with certain moral affirmations and ideals.

Existential. The contribution of this school of thought to preaching has already been spelled out in terms of its understanding of the origin of guilt. In this particular section of the study it helps the preacher to understand the creative potential of guilt. It is in this regard that Boisen and Oates along with the existentialists were quoted as seeing certain anxiety and guilt feelings as being the impetus for new growth in self awareness.

The greatest contribution of this theory will come in the third section of the research when the subject of therapy is considered. However, we feel that this division of the comparative analysis has demonstrated how essential it is for the preacher to understand the nature of existential guilt in order to properly interpret the Scriptural concept of judgment.

Summary.

When the psychological and preaching methods of interpreting guilt are compared, it is obvious that the preaching formulations speak in much broader and inclusive terms concerning guilt. Preaching has a tendency to identify guilt and anxiety in general as the evidence or result of sin. On the other hand, psychological theory sees many functions and causes for each of these human experiences. Some of the functions are healthy and creative while others are unhealthy and neurotic.

In order to clarify some of the confusion between these two disciplines in this area, the function of the personality of the preacher was studied. It became obvious that the unresolved hostilities and fears of the preacher often protrude into the sermon. Since preaching is the communication of truth through personality, it is important that the "personality" be capable of transmitting the healthy elements of the gospel. One study along this theme revealed that the preacher feels guilty because of his inability to live up to goals which he feels the parishioners have set for him. The preacher then in turn spends 87.1% of his preaching time holding up impossible goals for his congregation and thus perpetuates the cycle of guilt and hostility.

In discussing guilt as a motivating factor in human experience, it was discovered that psychologists as well as

preachers see the positive potential in creative anxiety. Guilt feelings are necessary for society and the individual. Likewise, the "conviction of sin" is often the first step toward personality growth and change both in religion and psychotherapy.

In light of the previous discussion, it was obvious that judgment was a part of man's life. The question for the preacher is how to preach a sense of judgment that will lead to healthy interaction between the self and God. This judgment includes a knowledge of neurotic guilt, the wrath of God, and the creative potential of human experience. Judgment must, therefore, always be evaluated in light of its aim which is to lead a man away from the tyranny of the illusion of self-sufficiency and to the grace and sufficiency of God. The psychological pattern of the alcoholic as he hits bottom, finds humility, surrenders, and experiences reduction of his ego was suggested as a possible analogy as to how the preaching of judgment could lead a person to the religious salvation for which he is looking.

Even though a general application of the contributions of current psychological theory had been made to preaching, certain specific implications for this section of the study were underscored. Such concepts as Freud's interpretation of unconscious processes and the function of neurotic defences and meaning of freedom were restated with special relevance to the task of preaching.

It was observed that the Interpersonalist theory has special relevance to preaching in terms of its understanding of the self dynamism and interpretation of the nature of guilt as the breaking of interpersonal relationships.

The greatest contribution of the Existentialist interpretation of guilt is found in a renewed understanding of the meaning of creative anxiety and ontological guilt. It was suggested that this concept could greatly aid the preacher in his interpretation of the Scriptural meaning of judgment.

CHAPTER III

THE RESOLUTION OF GUILT

FORMULATIONS OF PREACHING

The preachers whom we have been studying seem to divide themselves into two broad categories when it comes to their formulations concerning the resolution of guilt. The first category consists of those who attempt in some way to give a psychological meaning or interpretation to the problem of how man's guilt is handled in relation to God. The other category is primarily composed of men who give only theological interpretations as to how man's guilt is ultimately resolved.

Both of these groups, since they are preachers, obviously feel that the resolution of guilt involves the elements of faith, repentance, confession, grace, forgiveness, and other religious means of expiation and satisfaction. However, the way in which these methods of handling the problem are presented seems to represent an area of division. We will first look at the preaching formulations that utilize some psychological interpretation of the resolution of guilt and then we will look at the formulations that seem to rely exclusively, or nearly so, on the theological terminology and approach to this problem.

Preaching Formulations Using Some Psychological Interpretations.

An example of this type of preaching formulation is found in the writing and preaching of Bishop Pike. He says, "we should be talking to our people in, for example, the terms of the categories of depth psychology, not because we think those categories infallible, but because through them we can better get through to people"¹ He goes on to say that after the people once understand the content of the message the preacher can then move on to the old labels.

Although Pike speaks about man's fear, inhibition, frustration and loneliness, he still feels that the cross is the answer to man's guilt and frustration.² He warns against the use of psychological terminology as a defense or rationalization against change. He feels that the difference between a human being and an animal is that a person does not have to stay the way he is. "When a person is written off as just being the way he is, then his humanity is being attacked-maybe he deserves it; that may be judgment."³

However, Pike is well aware of the fact that a mishandling of guilt will only force it into the uncon-

¹James Pike, A New Look at Preaching (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1961), pp. 17-18.

²Ibid., pp. 53-54.

³Ibid., p. 40.

scious. Even though he feels the answer is the Gospel, he asks the important question of how does a person avoid shoving a sense of guilt down into the unconscious, and how does he avoid carrying it around in the conscious mind? If he carries it around in the conscious mind he feels inferior, no good to anybody and ineffective, but what then can be done with this sense of guilt?

At this point, Pike tells a story in his sermons which helps to illustrate how guilt can be dealt with effectively. It seems that Bishop Pike and his family were moving into a summer house on Cape Cod. They left New York and, after making several stops, arrived at the cottage. Near the house was a general store where they purchased some supplies including a "three-cornered thing for the kitchen sink." By mid-morning this was full; and since he was going back to the store, he decided to buy a more adequate receptacle. This time he bought a step-on can. That was full by the next morning. By now the wife insisted on getting at the problem more basically. Pike reports that he unloaded the stationwagon and purchased two large galvanized cans. This solved the problem for a week. Then what? Well, one knows how these modern houses are today, lots of closet space.

At this place the congregation gets the point, and Pike says it is time for the preacher to point up that it does no good to suppress guilt into the unconscious. But

the next step is to answer the inquiry of the people as to what actually happened to all of the garbage. Pike now tells how he decided to arrange for an outside agency to take it off his hands. Then he says,

Now, you see the congregation is ready for the Gospel. Right now is the time to affirm that the unique thing about Christian faith is that we believe in a God who has the resources to take all the sin, all the hurt, yes all the filth of the world unto himself. This is our central teaching.⁴

The point of this illustration according to Pike, is that a person cannot keep it (guilt) around the conscious mind (the "kitchen," "one simply must tidy up once in a while"), and one does not dare lock it up in a closet. Who is to take care of it? The "Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world." Once this idea is across, Pike then feels the preacher should introduce the familiar labels. So he says at the end of this sermon:

Now this is what the Church has always meant by justification (which doesn't mean being right, it means being taken for right) by grace (not earned, sheer gift) through faith (responding in repentance and in belief in the promises of a God who is everlastingly this way, whose very nature and property is to forgive and have mercy).⁵

Now the labels come in very well if the people have understood up to this point that the preacher is speaking about them. Now is the time to talk with the traditional theological terminology of justification and sanctification.

⁴Ibid., pp. 43-44.

⁵Ibid., p. 45.

Pike feels that this is an example of how a preacher can start with a problem that is less than the final problem of existence and still move to the kerygma, the old answer, the Gospel, at the end of the story.

We have been discussing one representative of a group of preachers who use some psychological interpretations when discussing the resolution of guilt. For a man like Jones, "the weekly sermon is a specialized form of pastoral counseling, a method of group spiritual therapy."⁶ Although Jones feels that the sermon should create a tension inside the consciences of men between what they are and do and what they know they ought to do, it still is a very effective means of introducing people to a religion that can cure inner failures so that there are "fewer broken homes, and marital failures, fewer mental breakdowns, less juvenile and grown-up delinquency . . ."⁷

The sermon, therefore, often produces "divine psychological shocks" that "catapult" people into decisions through which diseases of the soul are cured. This same thing happens, says Jones, when the psychiatrist uses "active psychotherapy" in which the patient under certain conditions is given direct advice and emotional support. As

⁶Illion Jones, Principles and Practice of Preaching (New York: Abingdon Press, 1946), p. 24.

⁷Ibid., p. 27.

Jones states,

Some psychologists may study the operations of the human mind and nervous system without feeling the need of considering whether a Divine Personality has or can have fellowship with human souls. But the preacher must believe and preach constantly that people need and can have communication with God, and that valid and essential psychological results flow from that meeting.⁸

Jones therefore combines the biblical message with the psychological terminology and interpretations of the day.

I am afraid that at times the result is neither good psychology or theology, but he does represent this particular category of preachers.

MacLennan sees the preacher as the ally of the physician and the psychologist and feels that he supplies what both of them recognize as indispensable to human happiness. The preacher puts within human hearts a central aspiration which both illumines and controls peoples' lives and destinies.⁹

The preacher is, therefore, a Christian therapist who will never declare the wrath of God toward all unrighteousness without also offering the sovereign remedy for sin, God's forgiveness mediated through Christ.¹⁰

⁸Ibid., p. 35.

⁹David MacLennan, The Preacher's Primer (New York: Oxford University Press, 1950), p. 71

¹⁰Ibid., p. 66.

Bartlett feels that it is in treating anxiety and guilt that preaching comes under its greatest criticism. It appears to him that the anxieties of today are far too deep and individual to be helped by preaching. This type of problem requires skilled personal counseling. In fact, attempting to deal with some of these problems through preaching will only make them worse.¹¹

The solution to the problem of guilt and anxiety is seen by Bartlett as it was partially seen by Fosdick years ago. That is, preaching should lead a person into counseling by giving him a word of support or comfort that will encourage further investigation into the problem. Nevertheless, the preacher is to bring a word of hope, a word of the gospel and God's relationship to persons in the here and now. He says, "If the preacher has a word of assurance upon which the anxious at last may stand, it is superlative news, the difference for some between life and death."¹²

Other men along these same lines attempt to deal with the problem of guilt through some recognition of psychological facts. For Tillich, God offers man a new being but does not rid him of his ontological guilt. Buttrick, after studying modern man and his literature, says man has

¹¹Gene Bartlett, The Audacity of Preaching (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1962), p. 89.

¹²Ibid.

a choice of God or suicide. For Davis, the resolution comes when the preacher believes in man's ability to respond and accept responsibility. For all of them it involves grace, mercy and pardon, but it also involves an attempt to reach man in an experience which he can identify and in language he can understand.

Preaching Formulations Using Primarily Theological Interpretations.

This particular category of preachers represents those who speak of the resolution of guilt primarily in theological language with little or no attempt to explain or apply these pronouncements in terms of modern psychology. James Stewart speaks in glowing terms of the all-sufficiency of Christ for every possible human predicament. There is no sin too great, no anxiety too severe, no guilt He cannot or will not or does not immediately answer and resolve in the cross. As only he can say it:

None of our poor human explanations of life's dark mystery can heal the hurt of baffled and tormented souls. Nothing can suffice but this—to see Love Incarnate taking upon itself the very worse that suffering and evil can do upon the earth, God going into action once and for all against the powers of darkness, Christ reigning from the deadly tree, and making his victory there the pledge and the assurance for all the sons of men.¹³

When Forsyth speaks about the resolution of guilt, he does it in absolute and positive terms. In answer to

¹³James Stewart, Heralds of God (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1946), p. 78.

the question as to what redemption really does for us he says,

It not merely aids us, nor enlightens us, nor kindles us, nor presents us with an ideal, or a contagion, or a sympathy; but it redeems us by the destruction of our guilt, the neutralizing of the evil we have done and the hallowing against us of His own Holy name.¹⁴

Again, in answer to a question concerning the consequences of reconciliation he says, "It is the destruction by God in Christ of sin's guilt and sin's distrust, and sin's blocking of the sky."¹⁵

Whereas in the first category the men were struggling with the different kinds of guilt and anxieties and were less dogmatic about what Christ can do; in this category the words are much more definite and absolute. Even Kennedy, who sometimes shows real insight into the interpretation of guilt, says that the resolution of guilt is found in becoming a "spiritual man". The natural man, who is opposite to the spiritual man, is one whose duties are painful and unpleasant. He is in a state of powerlessness. "Life is not safe for him, and in the face of evils which he deplores there seems no way to control it."¹⁶

¹⁴P. T. Forsyth, Positive Preaching and the Modern Mind (London: Independent Press, 1907), p. 38.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 40.

¹⁶Gerald Kennedy, His Word Through Preaching (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1947), p. 197.

"Tomorrow is a nightmare and his life moves in the direction of failure with the inevitability of a Greek tragedy."¹⁷

However, the spiritual man is an integrated personality whose struggles are no longer meaningless and self contradictory. "Life makes sense to him, and the quality of his character becomes the most convincing testimony that there is meaning at the center of things."¹⁸ For this man there is never any doubt that the God who meets us in Jesus respects each person and He has no desire to engulf any man in an atmosphere that melts the distinct boundaries of his personality. As Kennedy says,

This sense of belonging comes to men who find at the heart of things the God who meets them in Christ. That relationship cuts straight through all the conflicts, the unanswered longings, the inadequacy.¹⁹

When Barth speaks on the resolution of guilt he pictures man locked in a prison because of his sin. Nevertheless, God wants to lay his hands upon man and overlook all of what has happened to him. Barth says, "We must really give God our hands when He walks toward us and desires to take them" He then states, "The hands of men which are taken out of guilt and laid in the hands of God and which He takes are clean hands for God forgives sin."²⁰

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 197-98. ¹⁸Ibid., pp. 198-99.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 200.

²⁰Karl Barth, Come, Holy Spirit (New York: Round Table Press, 1934), p. 7.

Thus, according to Barth, what God asks is, "Will you, in spite of the fact that you do not perceive me, will you put yourself in my hands and let yourself be led by me, even through the dark?"²¹ If we give him our hands, then God can look upon us as free and not imprisoned.

The best way to understand Brunner's conception of the resolution of guilt is to let him speak in the following manner-it will be noted that his approach is much like that of Barth's:

. . . the Lord has descended into hell for us in order to deliver us from it. See, just as he carries the burden of guilt for you so that you can come again to God as if you had no guilt, so he also comes into your despair so that you may know.²²

He (Jesus) had to despair of God for us so that we do not have to despair of God, just as he had to die the penal death so that we may become free of the punishment. He has taken all that upon himself so that we may become free of it.²³

Again, we see how these men relate the resolution of guilt in theological language and example. There is no attempt here to relate this to contemporary psychological terminology or theory.

Along this same line, we have the instruction of Haselden. He says that the preacher should not forget that

²¹Ibid., p. 9.

²²Emil Brunner, I Believe in the Living God (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961), p. 84.

²³Ibid., p. 83.

the preacher should not forget that the sermon is not "an exercise in nondirective counseling. On the contrary, the sermon proclaims, declares, specifies; it is boldly indicative and declarative."²⁴ However, he likewise states that the preacher has not completed his task when he has warned men of a Peril and given them the hope of a Promise. He is still responsible to present to man One who can transform Peril into Promise.

When he is asked what it is that is offered to man, he makes it clear that the preacher is not a sociologist, psychologist or political scientist; on the contrary he says preachers "are proclaimers of the redeeming and reconciling act of God in Jesus Christ for the whole fabric of human experience."²⁵ In this regard Haselden is very emphatic that the message of Christianity is the age-old message of the creation's need and the Creator's response; the runaway child and the seeking Father; the evil that scatters and the Love that gathers all things to itself. The Gospel, is, therefore, the blunt, unapologetic claim that Jesus Christ is the Light of the world--timeless, universal, final, sufficient.²⁶

²⁴Kyle Haselden, The Urgency of Preaching (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), p. 62.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Ibid., p. 67.

Sangster admonishes his people that at times others will be drawn to them because of what they see in their lives. He says it will be a temptation at that time to explain their radiant happiness in many different ways. It is then that they must without cowardice or faltering vagueness confess that Christ is the answer which they have found. He asks them to state their testimony in the simple, homely words of the hymn,

Christ of all my hopes the ground,
Christ, the spring of all my joy.

He says, "Let them know that it was religion which did it for you. Overcome your shyness to tell them the secret of it all is Christ."²⁷

In this same manner he tells the people to put nothing beyond the grace of God, but on the contrary they should claim a perfect cure for sin. He says,

Don't live in the mental state of those whose subconscious thinking runs like this: "All people sin. I must too." Paul answered that false reasoning when he said, "Make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof." . . . Is anything too hard for the Almighty? Have faith for holiness . . .²⁸

For a theologian like Ritschl, "the Christian sermon is ad hominem, directed to man, with the understanding

²⁷William Sangster, Can I Know God? (New York: Abingdon Press, 1960), p. 157.

²⁸Ibid., p. 166.

that the hearers are reconciled with God through death of the one man Jesus Christ."²⁹ The preacher, who is a good exegete, must never attempt to become a genius in communication, for he would be fighting against his own calling. The world, of course, "wants to hear preachers who know how to persuade people; preachers who are masters at minimizing the skandalon of the challenging Word of God; preachers who make it easier to become Christians."³⁰

However, in contrast to what the world may want,

The messengers of Christ have no such credentials--all they have is the content of their very message, which is Jesus Christ Himself. They are completely bound to the Word, which is also binding on others as soon as it is proclaimed.³¹

We have thus far been looking at men who are aware of the importance of stating the biblical message of the resolution of guilt in biblical terms and analogies. There are other men such as Farmer, Miller, and Pearson who likewise treat the problem of guilt in this manner but add a word of warning that a word that is not heard in the language of the people is also not communicated. These men try to maintain the tension between the biblical message to the individual and its corporateness. Likewise, they often stress, particularly Farmer, that the resolution comes in

²⁹Dietrich Ritschl, A Theology of Proclamation (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1960), p. 175.

³⁰Ibid., p. 62.

³¹Ibid., p. 63.

an I-Thou encounter that cannot always be spelled out in detail. In every case it is the mercy and forgiveness of God that brings about the ultimate solution.

Summary.

The preachers we have been studying have been divided into two categories in regard to how they handle the resolution of guilt. One group attempts to use some contemporary psychological terminology or analogies in communicating this experience. The second group stays mainly with the use of theological language and concepts.

The first group stresses the contact that must be made with man if he is ever to hear and understand the message of the Gospel. The second stresses the importance of remaining faithful to the sermon as a revelation of God and, thereby, stresses the "encounter" effect on human sin and guilt. Although both groups use the "old labels" of sin, repentance, justification, etc., there is a difference of emphasis concerning the way in which the theology involved in these labels must be expressed.

Fosdick, in a masterful way, combines the important emphasis of the two groups under consideration. He uses both the insights gained from human interaction and psychological need along with the importance of God's interaction with the human soul and the significance of the theology of the "old labels." He does not always succeed in doing this, but in this case he seems to have accomp-

lished the task. In speaking on the forgiveness of sins he says,

When, therefore, the Gospel has invited men to forgiveness, it never has invited them to a light hearted place where sins are condoned. It has called them to the cross. And they have always heard the cross saying to them that it was hard even for God to forgive. It cost. It cost just what it always cost when men forgive: love putting itself in our place, bearing on its innocence the burden of our guilt. For whether a mother forgives a son or God forgives us, a cross is always at the center of it, and it is not easy.³²

And then in the last sentences of the sermon he says,

Go down into that secret place. Unlock that hidden door. Take out that unforgiven sin. For your soul's sake, get rid of it! But there is only one way. Whatever theology you hold, it is the way of the cross-penitence, confession, restitution, pardon.³³

³²Harry Emerson Fosdick, Riverside Sermons (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1958), p. 299.

³³Ibid., p. 300.

PSYCHOLOGICAL METHODS OF THERAPY

We now turn in our inquiry to some psychological methods of resolving the problem of guilt. In this discussion, we will look at the Freudian, Neo-Freudian, Interpersonal and Existential systems of psychotherapy. We will not attempt to elucidate the total method of therapy for each school, but will be primarily interested in what they have to say about how guilt should be handled.

Freudian.

Freud expressed the aim of the therapeutic efforts of psychoanalysis in very simple terms when he said that "their object is to strengthen the ego, to make it more independent of the super-ego, to widen its field of vision and so to extend its organization that it can take over new portions of the id. Where id was, there shall ego be."³⁴

The procedure in analysis recognizes the Freudian concept of the importance of the superego in explaining guilt and neurosis. The Freudian theory of neurosis is based upon the conflict involved between the id (libidinal impulses) and the superego (the censor) as has already been mentioned. Dalbiez explains it in the following way:

When through force of circumstances, the libido does not find its normal satisfaction, i.e., when

³⁴Sigmund Freud, New Introductory Lectures On Psycho-Analysis (New York: Norton, 1933), pp. 111-12.

there is privation, the frustrated instinct tends to revert to an antecedent stage, an infantile and, therefore, a perverse form of pleasure. Privation leads to regression. But the adult ego cannot adjust to these abnormal gratifications. There is, therefore, psychic conflict and repression of the libido. If repression fails, neurotic symptom-formation takes place through the return of the repressed urge.³⁵

In keeping with this description, psychoanalysis works on the basis that conscious apprehension is the means of re-establishing the possibility of choice, of breaking away from automatism. The essence of analytical cure consists in resolving morbid habits by reducing them to the memory of the events from which they sprang.³⁶ Therefore, the resolution of unconscious conflict can be obtained only by making the neurotic aware of the basis for his guilt feelings, only by bringing the basis of the conflict to the perceptive or conscious level. The theory is that knowledge of the source will bring an end to the guilt feelings.³⁷

An important aspect of Freud's concept of guilt and the possible resolution of this problem lies in his understanding of the relationship between guilt and religion.

³⁵Roland Dalbiez, Psychoanalytical Method and the Doctrine of Freud (London: Longmans, Green, 1948), I, 199.

³⁶Ibid., p. 205.

³⁷John Falcone, "A Study of the Theological and Psychiatric Aspects of Guilt" (Unpublished dissertation S. T.L., St. Mary's University, 1961), p. 54.

Man experiences an intensively active and unexplained sense of sin and guilt which to Freud is pathological and compulsive. Religion is man's way of dealing with this form of neurosis. However, it is a rather ineffectual form at that. According to Rieff, Freud's account of guilt and repression forces a backward flow of the destructive instincts upon the self. The hostilities built up by the conflict between the id and the super-ego are not directed outward but toward oneself in the form of intensified self-punishment and feelings of guilt. Therefore, the over-scrupulous and conscience-ridden person is in the grip of certain pre-possessions of which he is unaware; the assumption is that his guilt will dissolve through therapy. All guilt, therefore, is based upon a lack of self-understanding and will disappear with self-knowledge.³⁸

The difference between the Freudian and Christian concepts of guilt and therapy are obvious. Guilt may be innate, original, natural, a feeling prior to action, according to Freud; but it is also strictly pathological. Consequently, the sense of guilt for a Freudian is always unhealthy; it can never arise from sin, for there is no such thing as sin. The normal person as well as the abnormal person suffers from an illusion concerning the true nature

³⁸Philip Rieff, Freud, The Mind of the Moralist (New York: Viking Press, 1959), p. 275.

of guilt. Rieff gives the following synopsis of the distinction between the Christian and Freudian sense of guilt:

When an instinctual trend undergoes repression, reads one formula in Civilization and Its Discontents, its libidinal elements are transformed into symptoms and its aggressive components into a sense of guilt. That guilt about which Freud writes is above all a sense of guilt, a psychological, not a moral fact. In the Freudian rhetoric, repression has a very special meaning, both individual and social; indeed, it is conception at which psychoanalysis meets Christianity back to back, so to speak. In the Christian psychology what is supposed to be repressed causing bad conscience is one's higher nature-the moral sense. In the Freudian psychology what was repressed, causing a sense of guilt, is one's lower nature-the instinctual desire. Thus, in Christianity, the sense of guilt is characteristically a sign of augmented moral delicacy; in Freudian psychology the sense of guilt is a source of private illness. In the culture undergoing the final reversals in religious meaning and value, the psychoanalytic inversion of Christianity's saving sense of guilt has had a curious appeal. Freud's meaning and that of Christianity are indeed close but completely at odds.³⁹

We have just made a brief sketch of how Freud viewed the problem of guilt and his proposed resolution through analysis. At a later time a more careful evaluation of Freud's proposals will be made. Let us now look at the Neo-Freudians and how they view this problem.

Neo-Freudian.

Karen Horney as a Neo-Freudian developed a system of therapy that has been identified as the "holistic" approach. Kelman, writing the article on Horney in the American Handbook of Psychiatry says that her method was

³⁹Ibid., p. 277.

"empirical, descriptive and intuitive, indicative and pragmatic-the school she founded is considered holistic."⁴⁰ Kelman then defines holism as "the concept that all aspects of living must be studied as a single reality; although individual aspects may be studied by abstraction, one must remain aware that all other living processes are concomitant."⁴¹

Horney was essentially growth oriented. She possessed an optimistic philosophy which stated that man's essential nature and spontaneous morality were one. We have previously mentioned⁴² that Horney believed in a morality of evolution in which the criterion for what one cultivates or rejects in himself lies in the question: is a particular attitude or drive inductive or obstructive to my human growth? As she states it:

. . . to work at ourselves becomes not only the prime moral obligation, but at the same time, in a very real sense, the prime moral privelege. To the extent that we take our growth seriously, it will be because of our desire to do so. . . the ideal is the liberation and cultivation of the forces which lead to self-realization.⁴³

⁴⁰Harold Kelman, "the Holistic Approach," The American Handbook of Psychiatry, (New York: Basic Books, 1959), II, 1434.

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Supra., p. 39.

⁴³Karen Horney, Neurosis and Human Growth (New York: Norton, 1950), pp. 15-16.

While Freud formulated the nature of guilt feelings as those arising from the superego in tension with the ego, masochism, and unconscious guilt, he considered the presence of guilt feelings a considerable obstacle to progress in therapy-particularly unconscious guilt feelings.⁴⁴

Horney, on the other hand, felt that much that looked like guilt is spurious. We have already discussed Horney's views on neurotic guilt and how self-recriminations are an unavoidable consequence of the need to appear perfect, whether in one's own eyes or those of another.

Horney said that her main objective in therapy is, after having recognized the neurotic trends, to discover in detail the functions they serve and the consequence they have on the patients personality and on his life. By following this philosophy, she felt that the anxiety of the patient is lessened and his relations with himself and other improve and thus he can dispense with his neurotic trends.⁴⁵

We have already noted many ways in which Horney differed from Freud. Another one of these differences centered around how active the therapist becomes in directing the analysis. Freud suggested that the analyst be

⁴⁴Freud, New Introductory Lectures On Psycho-Analysis, p. 149.

⁴⁵Karen Horney, New Ways in Psychoanalysis (New York: Norton, 1939), p. 281.

imperturbably tolerant-that is, no value judgments. However, as Kelman points out, "he contradicted this ideal when he called psychoanalysis re-education, because education implies moral values and goals."⁴⁶ Kelman goes on to say that since this ideal of being non-judgmental cannot be attained and does not allay the patient's fear of condemnation, that Horney suggests an attitude of constructive friendliness, which implies the necessity for an analysis of moral problems. As she says at the end of New Ways in Psychoanalysis:

Thus I hold that the aim of analysis is not to render life devoid of risks and conflicts, but to enable an individual eventually to solve his problems himself.

The end is to help him to regain his spontaneity, to find his measurements of value in himself, in short, to give him the courage to be himself.⁴⁷

Earlier in our study we discussed the place Fromm plays in the interpretation of guilt in human behavior.⁴⁸ It was mentioned at that time that Fromm sees real danger in developing what he calls the authoritarian conscience. This kind of conscience is the submission to some irrational authority outside of the self. He would rather substitute what he terms a humanistic conscience which states

⁴⁶Kelman, op. cit., p. 1441.

⁴⁷Horney, New Ways in Psycho-Analysis, p. 305.

⁴⁸Supra., pp. 41-43.

that the authority for the conscience resides in man himself.

In keeping with this emphasis, Fromm draws a line of distinction between psychoanalysis where adjustment to one's culture is the aim of cure, and the humanistic kind of psychoanalysis where realization of one's human potentialities and individuality which must transcend one's particular culture is the goal.⁴⁹ For Fromm, therefore, the goal of psychotherapy is the transformation of the personality from its culture-bound state to its full human range. And concerning the resolution of guilt, it would be to free man from the bondage of an authoritarian conscience to find within himself his own morality.

The distinction which Fromm makes between an immature and a mature conscience is helpfully discussed in Man for Himself.⁵⁰ Fromm says, as we have previously commented, that the mark of an immature conscience is its authoritarian nature. It is ridden by a sense of obedience, self-sacrifice, duty, and resignation. The victim, here, fears the loss of the approval of the father figure who dominates an essentially childish superego. By contrast,

⁴⁹Earl G. Witenberg, Janet MacKenzie Rioch, Milton Mazer, "The Interpersonal and Cultural Approaches," The American Handbook of Psychiatry, II, 1426-32.

⁵⁰Erich Fromm, Man for Himself, (New York: Rinehart, 1947), pp. 143-72.

the mature conscience is animated by adult sentiments, by self-chosen goals, by a continuously productive relation between the individual and his surrounding world.

This distinction which Fromm makes is a valid one. However, Allport is also correct when he makes the following observation concerning this approach:

Excepting for one feature of his analysis I would subscribe wholeheartedly to Fromm's position. He mistakenly assumes that a religious conscience, almost of necessity, is an authoritarian (immature) conscience. While he is right in pointing out that great religions have a way of turning into power systems that seize control of the youthful adherents conscience, he fails to see that this control may be only temporary. The individual in his course of maturing may rediscover for himself the essential truths of his religion, and thus incorporate them into a wholly productive and rational conscience. The fact that Christian doctrine, for example, may be accepted in a supine manner by some people, neither invalidates the doctrine nor prevents its wholehearted acceptance by an individual who in the course of his quest discovers relevance to the totality of his own life's experience. It does not follow, therefore, as Fromm concludes, that the only mature ethics must be a humanistic ethics.⁵¹

Interpersonal.

We have already looked at Sullivan's interpretation of guilt and the distinction he makes between "real" guilt as he understands it and "crazy" guilt.⁵² He acknowledges that "real" guilt is seldom dealt with in a psychotherapeutic situation. On the other hand, "crazy" guilt, which

⁵¹Gordon Allport, The Individual and his Religion (New York: Macmillan, 1960), p. 91.

⁵²Supra., pp. 30-35.

is a defence against anxiety is quite a problem in therapy.

In the psychiatric interview Sullivan followed a close case history approach with each patient. He attempted to understand the patients' difficulties at each level of their growth. The analyst becomes a "participant observer" during the interview and is very much aware of the interpersonal relationship he has with the patient.

The guiding line for Sullivan was the experience of anxiety. If the patient is pursuing a line of thought and suddenly shifts to another, the analyst assumes that anxiety would have been experienced had the patient continued with what he started. When this happens, the analyst notes two things:

First, the moment of shift and content of thought which was interrupted in order that the red thread of anxiety may again be taken up; second, the kind of security operation which was used to escape from the anxiety-laden path being pursued.⁵³

Thus, gradually through the process of analysis by following the leading of anxiety and the various security systems used by the patient, the "bad-me" and "not-me" are brought into awareness where they may be seen as archaic and currently irrelevant organizations and may be exorcised as personal demons which no longer exist.⁵⁴

However, Sullivan demonstrates a continuing conflict between the pessimistic and optimistic sides to his nature.

⁵³Witenberg, op. cit., p. 1426.

⁵⁴Ibid.

He expressed real doubt as to whether a person could be led to seek out a less complicated, anxious-ridden life and thereby improve his adequacy and appropriateness of his performance with others.⁵⁵ Sullivan also expressed himself quite freely on the limitations of psychiatry. He felt that it was more of an art than a science; the prolonged interview method is difficult and costly; the social order greatly hinders the recovery of both the gifted and the less gifted. And as for those who have some inherent factor or some type of warp which was not corrected in time and which, therefore, prevents them from using their opportunities fully,

The only chance such a person has then-except by an act of God-is through psychiatry. And how small that chance is has become more and more overwhelmingly apparent to me the longer I live.⁵⁶

However, in spite of Sullivan's pessimism, he does specify how he handles guilt in his own view of analysis. He feels that the way the psychiatrist can deal with "crazy" guilt which is a rationalization of anxiety and must be traversed and gotten rid of is "usually by an appeal to other instances where the person has violated this

⁵⁵Sverre T. Jacobson, "The Interpersonalism of Guilt and Forgiveness in the Writings of Harry Stack Sullivan and Emil Brunner: (Unpublished dissertation Th.D., Princeton Theological Seminary, 1959), p. 197.

⁵⁶Harry Sullivan, The Interpersonal Theory of Psychiatry (New York: Norton, 1953), p. 298.

alleged principle with utter impunity and an absence of guilt. It is only after they have disintegrated the rationalization, which the alleged guilt is in such an instance, that you get anywhere near the actual cause of the underlying anxiety."⁵⁷

The situation is different when it comes to real guilt:

But in the case where guilt is really guilt, where the person for relatively clear reasons is justifiably and properly shaky at having fallen down on his own standards of life, there one has a much simpler therapeutic problem. And it is a problem to be handled in quite a different way-namely, by finding out what the circumstances were under which this occurred, because a strong ideal does not ordinarily rest and let things happen which violate it. Something or other has allowed the unusual to happen.⁵⁸

Sullivan goes on to say that he looks for the key as to what happened in the rest of the personality and does not expect it to be obvious or very accessible to awareness. He also expects to find a great deal of anxiety surrounding this act which has resulted from the personality colliding with the most valued ideals in the self system and thereby of course posing a threat to security.

Existential.

During our discussion of the contribution of existentialism to the concept of the origin of guilt,⁵⁹ it was

⁵⁷Harry Sullivan, Clinical Studies in Psychiatry (New York: Norton, 1956), pp. 114-15.

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 115

⁵⁹Supra., pp. 43-44.

mentioned that in contrast to Freud Daseinanalysis acknowledges more than guilt feelings; in the view of analysis of of Dasein, man is primarily guilty. The condition of the individual when confronted with the issue of fulfilling his potentialities is anxiety. When a person denies these potentialities, fails to fulfill them, his condition is guilt. "That is to say, guilt is also an ontological characteristic of human existence."⁶⁰

Ontological guilt becomes in existentialism one of the most potent sources of a sound humility and an unsentimental attitude of forgiveness toward one's fellow men. The first form of this guilt stems from the denial of one's potentialities which is called Eigenwelt, or own-world; the second form corresponds roughly to Mitwelt, since it is chiefly related to one's fellow men; and the third form of ontological guilt involves Umwelt and is known more as "separation guilt" and stands in relation to nature as a whole.

Rollo May explains the characteristics of ontological guilt as follows:

First, everyone participates in it. No one of us fails to some extent to distort the reality of his fellow men, and no one fulfills his own potentialities. . . Second, ontological guilt does not come from cultural prohibitions, or from introjection of cultural mores; it is rooted in the fact of self-awareness. . .

⁶⁰Rollo May, Existence (New York: Basic Books, 1958), p. 52.

Third, ontological guilt is not to be confused with morbid or neurotic guilt. If it is unaccepted and repressed, it may turn into neurotic guilt. . . Fourth, ontological guilt does not lead to symptom formation, but has constructive effects in the personality. Specifically, it can and should lead to humility, . . . sharpened sensitivity in relationships with fellow men, and increased creativity in the use of one's own potentialities.⁶¹

Since existential guilt consists in man's failing to carry out the mandate to fulfill his potentialities, he becomes aware of the eternal existence of this guilt. For man can only engage his existence in one of the myriads of his possible relationships at a time. In this way, he is always behind and hence always experiencing ontological guilt.

When it comes to the resolution of guilt, Boss makes the following comment:

Because of existential being-in-debt (experienced as guilt), even the most skillfully conducted psychoanalysis cannot free man of guilt. Actually, not a single analysand could be found in the whole world who has been transformed into a really guiltless person by psychoanalytic treatment.⁶²

Boss goes on to say that the most and the worst an analysis can accomplish in this regard is to deafen a patient to his pangs of conscience, and this is not to his advantage. The ideally new man, liberated from guilt by psychoanalysis is

⁶¹Ibid., p. 55.

⁶²Medard Boss, Psychoanalysis and Daseinanalysis (New York: Basic Books, 1963), p. 270.

"an antiquated myth: charming and beautiful but, alas, incapable of realization."⁶³

Nevertheless, psychoanalysis can accomplish something else. It can, according to this view, elucidate the past, present, and future of a patient's life to the point where he becomes thoroughly aware of his existential being-in-debt. This experience in turn enables him to acknowledge his debt, to say "yes" to it and take it upon himself. Therefore, once a person has been freed for his essential and existential being-in-debt, he no longer experiences neurotic feelings of guilt. The neurotic feelings do not originate in the person himself but are derived from a foreign and crippling mentality which his educators forced upon him.⁶⁴

Once a person reaches the goal of Daseinanalysis—that is, if he freely accepts his debt to his existence—he reaches at the same time the goal Freud had in mind—full capacity for work and enjoyment. But, according to the existential therapists, he will no longer use these capacities in the service of egotistic, power-or pleasure-tendencies. "Rather, he will let all his possibilities of relating to the world be used as the luminated realm into which all he encounters may come to its full emergence, into its genuine being, and unfold in its meaning to the

⁶³Ibid.

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 271.

fullest extent."⁶⁵ Once this kind of freedom is experienced, the former burdens of a bad conscience and of guilt feelings give way without further ado to a happy readiness for being thus needed by the phenomena of our world.

Summary:

In this section we have been investigating various methods used in psychology to effect the resolution of guilt. Since for the Freudian, guilt feelings are the result of a tension between the ego and the superego, the resolution of guilt comes about by extending the power of the ego to handle more of the id impulses and thus reduce the severity of the superego. However, Freud could only deal with guilt feelings and thus for him all guilt has a pathological character to it and represents a certain amount of infantile regression. It is only by bringing unconscious materials to the conscious level of awareness that guilt feelings can ultimately be dealt with.

On the other hand, a Neo-Freudian like Horney recognizes the difference between real and neurotic guilt. Real guilt comes about through the breaking of a norm or standard which the person has accepted as necessary for his behavior whereas neurotic guilt is usually a way of avoiding a deeper threat of facing the possibility of not being perfect. For Horney, morality is arrived at by an

⁶⁵Ibid.

evolutionary change within the individual. Morality is not the result of inner dictates or external laws. The person must be free to grow and develop for himself his own level of morality and thus determine his own involvement with guilt.

For Fromm, the resolution of guilt will come when man no longer surrenders to an authoritarian conscience or authority figures but becomes his own standard through growing productivity. A humanistic ethic is the only one which man can acknowledge and still maintain his freedom.

Sullivan helps the patient understand the threats which are being made to his security system. By tracing the blocking in therapy due to anxiety the therapist is able to discover the source of guilt. As the patient gets rid of the tyranny of the "bad me" and "not me" through exposure to reality, he is able to adjust to his real guilt feelings and discard the crazy and neurotic symptoms of guilt.

In existential therapy the problem is different. Here there is an experience of ontological guilt which is not eradicated through therapy. Neurotic guilt is dealt with when man accepts the responsibility of his own freedom and no longer avoids the possibility of "being". In this case, guilt has dynamic and creative potentialities.

SYNTHESIS AND APPLICATION

Comparison of the Preaching and Psychological Forms of Resolution.

In comparing the preaching and psychological formulations concerning the resolution of guilt, it is immediately noticeable that preaching is dealing with conscious, objective guilt. The same statement may be made here as it has been made in other sections of this study that preaching does not usually differentiate between the various forms of guilt. Thus, preaching is actually only dealing with the guilt which can be felt and identified by the parishoner or which is stimulated by the sermon. This guilt may or may not be real guilt. It may or may not have anything to do with God and His judgment, but it is assumed by most of the preachers we have studied that the people in the congregation are able to distinguish their childish superego concepts from their neurotic and healthy guilt feelings.

Since preaching offers the solution of forgiveness through repentance and confession for all guilt, it is assumed that all conscious guilt is of the variety that can be handled through this method of resolution. However, even as in preaching the various experiences of guilt are not defined, so the resolution is a wholesale operation--all guilt is often spoken of as being destroyed. This approach is like offering one kind of medicine for illness in gen-

eral. This overstatement concerning the resolution of guilt is reinforced by theological language which states that Christ descended into Hell and took all our burdens with Him or that we were all locked in a prison of guilt and are now all free. An exception to this observation is found in the preaching of Bartlett, who feels that preaching cannot ultimately deal with these specific problems of guilt but is to offer a word of assurance in the midst of man's anxiety and despair.

Nevertheless, the preaching concepts do take guilt seriously. Even if the resolutions sound simple and uncomplicated, the cost of forgiveness is always recognized. The resolution therefore must involve a wholehearted commitment to Christ and his salvation. This concept is brought out negatively by Buttrick, who after studying contemporary man stated that only God or suicide are options as an answer to man's guilt.

The preaching formulations, however, also offer a hope for tomorrow through a renewed spiritual life. The resolution does not stop when the pangs of conscience are quieted. For some preachers, like Kennedy and Sangster, the description of the new life takes on impossible dimensions. However, their stress is true when they declare that the forgiveness of God and the resolution of guilt are always the beginning of something new and not just the dissolving of something in the past.

It is further contended by the preaching concepts that the preaching of judgment or the declaration of God's will for man is always a means toward the end of redemption and release. Guilt is never an end in itself but is the vehicle that leads man to freedom through Christ. The resolution of guilt is a goal of preaching.

In contrast and comparison with the preaching formulations the psychological methods of therapy obviously do not offer forgiveness for objective guilt. Here guilt must be dealt with as a "sense" or "feeling". If forgiveness is involved, it must be one's ability to forgive himself. This is evidenced in Freud's concept of resolution which is to reduce the severity of the superego which is an infantile carryover from earlier biological needs and the introjection of punitive parents. As such, the guilt which one feels is really an anachronism as is evidence of the neurosis which stems from this kind of introjection. By making the unconscious conscious, Freud hoped to rid man of his pathological commitments and thereby free him from the compulsive neurosis of attempting to solve his guilt problem through religion.

Psychoanalysis attempts to deal with problems according to the objective criteria of the scientific method. However, as Fromm has pointed out, it is in this area that it has its biggest blind spot. He says,

Psychoanalysis, in an attempt to establish psychology as a natural science, made the mistake of divorcing psychology from problems of philosophy and ethics. It ignored the fact that human personality cannot be understood unless we look at man in his totality, which includes his need to find an answer to the question of the meaning of his existence and to discover norms according to which he ought to live.⁶⁶

DeYoung believes that one must make a decision between the Freudian and the Christian presuppositions with regard to the nature of guilt. He says that both Freud and historic Christian faith cannot be true. And that it will not do to say that one can accept Freud's metapsychology but reject his metaphysics. He contends that "psychoanalysis is a wisdom about life, not simply a therapeutic technique. Its technique derives from its view of human nature, not vice versa."⁶⁷ He, therefore, contends that as far as the religious concomitants of the sense of guilt are concerned, "Freud's basic contention is either right and Christianity is wrong; or Christianity is right and Freud is wrong."⁶⁸

Although Horney has been helpful in distinguishing neurotic guilt from what she would term real guilt, she is still totally dependent on man for his own establishment of

⁶⁶Fromm, op. cit., pp. 6-7.

⁶⁷Quintin DeYoung, "A Study of Contemporary Christian Existential Theology (Kierkegaard and Tillich) and Modern Dynamic Psychology (Freud and Sullivan) Concerning Guilt Feelings" (Unpublished dissertation Ph.D., University of Southern California, 1959), p. 290.

⁶⁸Ibid.

morality. She assumes that the exposure of the neurotic trend will thereby destroy its power. However, we wonder if this is true since she recognizes that the neurotic person has built up a pattern of self-recrimination as a means of attaining a certain amount of security and taking away this particular ego defense will obviously not solve the problem unless he has found something else in which he might find security. Although such implications have not been studied in this paper, we feel that it could be demonstrated that certain kinds of guilt can only be resolved through some process of restitution or confession. Of course, she has no help for the person who really does feel guilty even for his own healthy reasons.

Fromm seems to be involved in the same humanistic evolution of morality. He stresses the danger of authoritarianism without helping man find a healthy substitute for this devotion outside of his own productiveness. However, he realizes that every man needs some "outside" help in finding release from the conscious and unconscious elements of a punitive superego. He needs a "frame of orientation and an object of devotion." If psychoanalysis is reeducation, there must be some direction or content to the process.

The same needs for security and acceptance are demonstrated in the resolutions offered by Sullivan. However, his pessimism concerning the possibility of therapy working to any large extent is an honest recognition of the

limitations of this process. The strength of Sullivan is his emphasis on interpersonal relations and the social needs of individuals. However, this emphasis also seems to be his greatest problem when it comes to the handling of guilt. May, as an existentialist, evaluates Sullivan's position by saying that the interpersonal schools deal too directly with the Mitwelt and not enough with the Eigenwelt. When this happens, the individual's interpersonal relations become hollow and sterile. The concept that one's role in society is determined by the "reflected appraisals" of other people suffers from logical inconsistency and goes against that for which Sullivan was really striving. This kind of reasoning,

" . . . tends to make the self a mirror of the group around one, to empty the self of vitality and originality, and to reduce the interpersonal world to mere "social relations." It opens the way to the tendency which is directly opposed to the goals of Sullivan. . . social conformity. Mitwelt does not automatically absorb either Umwelt or Eigenwelt." ⁶⁹

The Existential school has made a great contribution to the resolution of guilt by pointing out the areas of human personality where guilt is creative and redemptive. However, we feel it is rather naive to believe that once man comes to the place where he recognizes his real freedom and accepts the responsibility for his "beingness" that he will thereby no longer use his freedom for selfish or

⁶⁹May, Existence, p. 64.

pleasure-seeking ends. The work of Frankl has demonstrated that it is necessary for man to have something or someone to whom he dedicates his freedom and finds a new kind of self-imposed bondage. This, then, becomes an inspiration for further freedom and productivity.

Tillich points out the general limitations of psychoanalysis and existentialism as an answer to man's dilemma when he comments:

Other psychoanalysts have described the human situation as correctible and amendable as a weakness only. The tragic element we have in genuine existentialism and in Freudianism. And my great and wonderful friend, Karen Horney, was very much against the existential implication of Freud and of myself as a theological existentialist, and we often fought about the question: Is man essentially healthy? If he is, only his basic anxiety has to be taken away; for example, if you save him from the evil influences of society, of competition and things like that, everything will be all right. Men like Fromm speak of the possibility of becoming an autonomous non-authoritarian personality who develops himself according to reason.⁷⁰

Tillich goes on to state that beyond all of the acute illnesses that produce psychosomatic irregularities and destruction there are existential presuppositions, and that neither Freudianism nor any purely existential consideration can heal these presuppositions. He feels that many psychoanalysts try to do this but their methods are never able to overcome the existential negativity, anxiety, estrangement, meaninglessness, and guilt. Their mistake is that they call

⁷⁰Paul Tillich, "Psychoanalysis, Existentialism, and Theology, Pastoral Psychology, IX (October 1958), 15.

all anxiety, all guilt, all emptiness, illness which can be overcome as any illness can be. But this is impossible.

"The existential structures cannot be healed by the most refined techniques. They are objects of salvation."⁷¹

The problem of the psychological resolution of guilt reaches new proportions when one adds together the limitations which Sullivan recognized, the evaluation of Tillich, and the restrictions which Fenichel acknowledges in psychoanalysis when he says,

Faced with the enormous neurotic (and non-neurotic) misery of today, we are sometimes near to despair, realizing that we can help only five to ten persons a year, we may find consolation in the insight that this limited psychotherapeutic work is at the same time the research method of a science which one day may gain the possibility of a more general application.⁷²

It appears from the preceding discussion that both the psychological and preaching formulations have strengths and limitations. It also appears that the main problem comes from an inadequate recognition of the limitations and objects of the two different formulations. By making either approach an all-inclusive and independent means of solving the problem, both fail in their mission and man is left in his guilty despair without hope.

In light of the problems raised through our present involvement with the resolution of guilt, there appears to

⁷¹Ibid.

⁷²Otto Fenichel, The Psychoanalytic Theory of Neurosis (New York: Norton, 1945), p. 589.

be at least two areas of interest which ought to be explored. The first of these is a more careful study of the preaching of grace and forgiveness which the preaching formulations say is the ultimate answer to man's guilt; and the second interest revolves around a clarification of how a preacher might approach his task when he wants to bear in mind what he has learned from his counseling insights.

The Preaching of Grace and Forgiveness.

It does not seem to be necessary here to establish that a great deal of the message of the Gospel is involved in the proclamation of grace and forgiveness. From God's first encounter with man in the Garden to the last words of Christ from the Cross, the themes of grace, forgiveness and restoration are an integral part of the revelation of God to man.

The story Jesus told about the prodigal son is often used as a parable of forgiveness. It illustrates the insight Jesus had into the nature of sin as estrangement and isolation. Because of this estrangement the son felt a profound sense of loneliness and meaninglessness to life. He attempted to find satisfaction for life by means other than personal relationships of love and acceptance. At last he sensed his own responsibility to answer for his own decisions and thus returned to the broken relationship with his father. In commenting on this parable Wise says,

. . . if a person is to break down the inner barrier to a sense of belonging, he must have something to assist him in the process. No man can carry on this struggle successfully by himself. He has to be sure that when he reaches out from behind his inner barriers there will be someone there to receive and accept him.⁷³

It is well accepted that Jesus did not offer a loving acceptance simply of and by himself. He felt this to be God's attitude toward men, the kind of relationship which God was attempting to offer men. He wanted men to know that they were dealing with a God who desired to accept, forgive and reestablish a relationship of communion. Guilt had disrupted this relationship and had created enmity and suspicion. God was now taking the initiative at restoring the broken ties of love and life.

Bartlett points out that although God demonstrates to man a great deal of permissiveness and acceptance he still has certain standards and demands. The Sermon on the Mount remains even though the statements seem to contradict the atmosphere of permissiveness and acceptance pronounced in other places. It is here that Bartlett reminds us that "it must be seen clearly, man's acceptance by God is not contingent upon our first achieving this kind of perfection."⁷⁴

⁷³Carroll Wise, Psychiatry and the Bible (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956), p. 81

⁷⁴Gene Bartlett, "Preaching and Pastoral Roles," Pastoral Psychology, II (March 1952), 25.

For along with the permissiveness and standards comes forgiveness. In short, the striving which is in the Christian way of life is not a striving for acceptance, but rather a striving within acceptance.

According to this approach the preached message should contribute to freedom from feelings of guilt in two ways: "First, it ought to help men accept their finiteness. Man does not need to feel guilty because he is finite. . . . Second, where guilt is real, the Christian message is that a way of forgiveness is open."⁷⁵ As long as Christianity is grounded in the revelation of a God who is concerned about relationships with men, it will be involved in responsibility and guilt and hence forgiveness is absolutely necessary for the continuation of this relationship. As Tournier expresses it,

The repression of conscience, the reflex of self-justification, and the projection of guilt upon others, are only false solutions to the problem of guilt. . . . The only true solution, both from the psychological standpoint and in the light of the Bible is the reverse of this, namely, the acceptance of our responsibilities, genuine recognition of our guilt, and repentance and the receiving of God's forgiveness in response to this repentance.⁷⁶

Connected with the concept of forgiveness is the Christian doctrine of the atonement. If one acknowledges

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 26.

⁷⁶Paul Tournier, Guilt and Grace (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1962), p. 142.

the doctrine of forgiveness, then he must also believe that there was something to forgive, that is, that a relationship had been broken and that personal guilt was a consequence of this break. The Gospel of forgiveness means that not only does the offense result in estrangement from God, but that there is nothing man can ever do to erase or make good this offense. As Mackintosh says when he speaks of man's sin and guilt:

It is something so real and dark that only three modes of Divine treatment are possible-to judge it, to bear it in sacrificial love, to forgive it freely. All these are present in the great act and experience of God which we call the Atonement.⁷⁷

The importance of the atonement is recognized when we see that forgiveness is only possible when the wronged person experiences the hurt or wound to the expression of his love, overcomes the inevitable sense of alienation created between him and the wrong-doer, and identifies himself with the wrong-doer as though the sin were his own.⁷⁸ Fosdick pointed out the cost of forgiveness when he said,

I do not know what theory of the atonement you may hold, and I might also say I do not care whether you have any theory at all, but recognize this fact: behind all the explanations of the atonement that have arisen and taken form and faded away in the history of Christian thought, this conviction has lain deep-the

⁷⁷H. R. Mackintosh, The Christian Experience of Forgiveness (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1927), p. 173,

⁷⁸John McKenzie, Guilt: Its Meaning and Significance (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), p. 160.

cross means that it was not easy even for God to forgive. It cost.⁷⁹

But what are some of the psychological implications of the atonement and forgiveness and how do they affect man's experience of guilt? Man fears from the time of his childhood that his anger and "sin" will destroy his relationship with the object of his love and desire. He imagines that the person upon whom he is dependent for life and nourishment may desert him if he shows his real feelings. This same fear seems to be present in the God-Man relationship. The atonement says that the object of man's love has not renounced or rejected him, but on the contrary is now bearing the broken relationship as if it were his own. The cross presents an everlasting "yes" to the question, Is God really for us?

But is not this kind of forgiveness based on repentance something man does? On the contrary, "Man's repentance is the condition of forgiveness; it does not induce forgiveness; it is the condition of his acceptance of forgiveness."⁸⁰ Repentance is a kind of coming to one's self. It is accepting one's finiteness and the need for relationship with others. It is the surrendering of the false sense of self-sufficiency and renouncing the struggle to be

⁷⁹Fosdick, op. cit., p. 298.

⁸⁰McKenzie, op. cit., p. 161.

one's own Lord. It is allowing someone else to become part of your life and the recognition of your need for the love and acceptance of others. Repentance, in short, is being human just as the experience of guilt and responsibility are marks of humanity. Repentance conditions man's capacity to receive forgiveness-it prepares him for the invasion of a new way of relating to himself and others. The man who finds it impossible to repent is struggling with his own narcissistic concept of life. He is still attempting to maintain the infantile grandiose feelings that he rules the world and all that is in it. He cannot trust. The Gospel invites him to trust in one who through atonement has demonstrated his faithfulness and willingness to care.

When it comes to what forgiveness does to guilt, we believe that Mackintosh stated it very well when he observed:

If one who knows God as faithfully and unchangeably Redeemer, there is an abiding sense of guilt. . . . But, whereas before reconciliation with God the feeling of guilt is purely disabling and suffuses the moral life with the consciousness of radical failure, later as an undertone of felt unworthiness, it aids him in fostering that humility and receptiveness apart from which the life of God cannot be ours.⁸¹

⁸¹Mackintosh, op. cit., p. 76.

While forgiveness through atonement does "destroy" our guilt in the sense of healing the alienation and the fear of losing the love object because of our sin, it does not destroy the kind of creative guilt which is part of our humanity and which now acts as an impetus for growth. The wall of separation has been broken down, but we still relate to a holy God who in Himself reminds us that we are made in His image and hence are the objects of His love and the recipients of tremendous potentiality. This is the kind of guilt anxiety that constantly reminds us that we are human. For this we do not need forgiveness but encouragement. In this regard DeYoung comments,

In the Christian understanding, therefore, guilt is never gotten rid of in this life. This life is a process of becoming and as long as there is becoming, there will be guilt. Nor is the aim of Christianity, either as a system or therapy, to relieve the individual of all sense of guilt. The aim of Christianity is to enable the individual to accept his guilt, and to use it creatively in a progressive overcoming of the estrangement of his existence. . . .⁸²

The Application of Psychological and Counseling Insights to Preaching.

One of the most important aspects of the relationship of the preaching and psychological formulations concerning the resolution of guilt lies in the attitude of the preacher and how well he has applied the psychological and counseling insights he has gained from his experience to

⁸²DeYoung, op. cit., p. 297.

his task of preaching. A student in homiletics class, when asked to consider the needs of his congregation as he prepared his message, replied, "I don't need to study audience needs or rapport. My pastor told me to forget about the people; just preach to the six cubic feet of air in front of me and consider the people as so many rows of cabbages."

Roy Pearson reminds us,

Many a sermon has not reached its target because it was never aimed; it was merely fired high up into the dark and dusty rafters of the sanctuary in the vague confidence that it would come down somewhere on the congregation. A good pastor may be a bad preacher for no other reason than that he keeps his pastoral insights and his homiletical purpose in two wholly separate compartments.⁸³

Out of all the psychological insights which might affect preaching, the most important is the understanding that preachers are talking to people, not things--that they are dealing with persons, not statistics. Halford Luccock tells of an English artist who was sketching in the Barbizon district in France. He was at work with his easel set up along a stream, and a group of four children appeared in front of him and watched eagerly every stroke of the pencil. Finally, one spoke the desire of all of them: "Mister," he pleaded, "Please get us in the picture."⁸⁴

⁸³Roy Pearson, The Ministry of Preaching (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959), p. 39.

⁸⁴Halford Luccock, "What Preaching Owes To Pastoral Counseling", Pastoral Psychology, II (March 1952), 9.

What would happen to preaching if ministers did attempt to get their people into the picture--if they developed a sense of "person-mindedness" in their ministry? The first thing that might happen would be a shift in the preacher's mind from the sermon's subject to a purposeful concern about its object.

One of the reasons for increased tension in the preacher as he addresses his congregation is that he is asking himself the question, "How am I doing?" instead of "Do you understand--is this helpful?" Preaching often resembles a high diving performance or a professional ice skater's routine. When a parishoner was asked about her pastor's preaching, she said, "I have never known anyone who could use such beautiful words." Preachers are often scratching people where they do not itch--answering questions they have not asked. A long time ago Fosdick wrote, "Only the preacher proceeds still upon the idea that folk come to church desperately anxious to discover what happened to the Jebusites."⁸⁵

To discover that one is talking to people is to discover that they have needs which must be met. When they come to church, they bring with them every kind of difficulty and problem to which flesh is an heir. A sermon must be

⁸⁵Harry Emerson Fosdick. "Personal Counseling and Preaching," Pastoral Counseling, II (March 1952), 13.

addressed to these needs. This is what makes it a sermon and not an exposition or a lecture. Once one has shared the human misery of life in his counseling interviews or allowed his understanding of the nature of man to penetrate his feelings, he dares not stand before these same people and speak without bringing to them some of the balm of God's concern for their lives.

If preachers allow their psychological insights to affect their preaching, they will become aware of the feelings of their congregation. One of the results of treating people as persons is the acceptance of their feelings. That is, they are given the right to feel any way they have to feel without threatening them with the withdrawal of affection and concern. The preacher who understands this will be involved with his congregation's feelings. His sermons will attempt to convey a sense of security to his people—a sense of there being Someone who will stand by and will help in times of trouble and difficulty. The need for security is basic to all human beings. This need is often felt in terms of loneliness. The preacher with counseling insight will understand that unless this sense of security is felt and made part of his parishoner's life, that all the "challenges" in the world will go unanswered by this person.

Understanding the feelings of the congregation will lead a preacher to attempt to make his people feel that

they are liked and wanted. The preacher's attitude, tone of voice, and behavior toward his people will convey this feeling. Of course, perhaps they are not wanted and liked--this too will be evident.

The preacher who realizes that he is talking to persons and who is aware of their feelings will avoid verbal attacks. Verbal attacks not only fail to achieve their aim, but worse still, tend to set up in the listener a mental block which results in the individual compartmentalizing his living.

The sermon should not be used to make people feel inferior but rather to help them to learn independence and to be able to accept responsibility. It will respect people's needs, but not offer more help than they are capable of using, or demand more of them than their capacities allow. In short, the minister as he preaches will respect the rights of each person in his congregation to be a person with integrity. He will do this by not belittling their ideas, jobs, plans or goals, and by conveying to them their privileges as children of God.

However, a preacher who has discovered a sense of "person-mindedness" as a result of his psychological insight will preach with directness and permissiveness. One often assumes that a counselor never confronts his client or becomes too direct in his suggestions. This assumption is based on the fact that the counselor is there to help

the person in pain to discover the cause of his discomfort. The counselor, however, does attempt to so relate to his client that, though he does not interpret the solution or prescribe a patent medicine cure, the client feels that his counselor is vitally concerned with his problem. Thus, the counselor lets the patient know, through his interest, that the patient is of utmost importance. At the same time the counselor gives the patient the right to make whatever choice the patient feels is important. The counselor is direct in interest and permissive in attitude.

The person-minded preacher will likewise not spend time dealing with irrelevant issues-life is too important and the pain too great to trifle with such matters. He will direct the Gospel to the deepest needs which he and his congregation are facing. Paul said, "I fight not as one who beats the air." At the same time he will allow the permissiveness of Christ, who, is portrayed in the last book of the New Testament, as saying, "I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice and will open the door I will come in ...". Once Christ is invited in he confronts the man behind the door with Himself, but he never bludgeons his way into the inner sanctuary of personality.

The preacher-counselor becomes aware of the many complex factors that make up human experience and behavior. Instead of categorically judging outward behavior, he must ask himself, "What human need is this person attempting to

satisfy in this inappropriate manner? Why does he need to do this? Why does he demand attention or substitute activity for love? What factors in his home life, background, self-image, or environment help to keep him in this tension? How can I present the Gospel to him in such a way that he understands the meaning and does not distort it to fit in with his illness or limited view of reality?"

A minister who preaches with counseling insight will, therefore, go beyond the surface manifestation of actions and will deal with causes. He will leave the judging to God, while, with all the skill and maturity at his command, he will attempt to bring the "Good News" of redeeming love to the total life of his people.

The minister who preaches with psychological insight will discover that he too is a person. It is easy for the preacher to think of himself as a sermon-making machine, and he often forgets to bring into his sermons preparation the fact that he faces the same problems as his congregations. One preacher remembers how phone he felt when he realized how he was threatening his congregation with all kinds of catastrophes if they did not pray more. Yet he had received the same admonition for years without it ever affecting him. His next sermon was on the difficulty of finding time to pray. Following this sermon, three people asked if they could talk to him about this problem. It had been bothering them for years, but they

did not think that anyone else ever had this difficulty.

Halford Luccock relates how Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, who has been a pioneer in this field of preaching to people's needs, has said that there are four types of preachers who do not preach directly to individuals and consequently miss the mark. These four preachers are: the man who is preaching a system of theology; the man who is getting something off his chest; the man who is trying to solve a world-wide problem; and the man who is charmed with his own literary style.⁸⁶ Until the preacher discovers that he, too, is a person, his preaching will be a great deal like the Pharisees of whom Jesus said, "They bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with their finger."

Summary.

In this section of our study we have looked at a comparison between the preaching and psychological resolutions of guilt, the meaning of forgiveness through atonement, and some suggestions as to what it would mean if a preacher allowed his counseling insights to affect his preaching.

In the first instance it was discovered that both the preaching and psychological methods have strengths and weaknesses and the difficulty is in determining the

⁸⁶Luccock, op. cit., p. 53.

importance of each area and its maximum effectiveness. Secondly, it was observed that forgiveness is an important part of the Gospel, but the reception of this forgiveness is another matter. Repentance becomes the means of preparation for the experience of forgiveness. However, forgiveness can only come when the break in relationship has been mended through love-this was the involvement of Christ and his atonement.

The third discussion centered around an approach to preaching that applied counseling and psychological insights to the task. Here the minister's attitude becomes an all important ingredient in the resolution of guilt. The next step in this regard would be to show how the minister with this attitude would preach on judgment and the importance of guilt. In fact, the conclusion of this study should give some clues as to how this can be done.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS

In each of the sections studied in this paper an attempt has been made to summarize and apply the finding of that section to preaching. However, in conclusion some general observations must be made concerning the entire study.

We have concluded from this research that a preaching of the Gospel which includes an invitation to a relationship with God and, thereby, may produce feelings of guilt, can be a creative way of helping man to rid himself of his defensive neurotic guilt through the discovery of real guilt. Neurotic and punitive elements of the superego are part of every man's past and unconscious processes. Man often goes through life with a vague sense of uneasiness and lostness. These feelings at times grow into a sense of inferiority and unworthiness. It is often concluded, therefore, that such a person would only be overwhelmed if confronted with the claims of the Gospel upon his life.

On the contrary, Horney has pointed out that the neurotic is really seeking for a sense of security and self-worth and, therefore, he is not done a favor by the ignoring of honest confrontation with real relationships. It is the imaginary wrongs and illusions that plague him. The existentialist is right when he contends that many of

the neurotic guilt feelings will be resolved when true freedom, true responsibility, and true guilt are experienced. Granted, it will not always be possible to break through the defence, particularly when it is rooted in an unconscious need, but the honest and open relationship of God to the person suffering from neurotic guilt may help to establish a sense of worth for him that will allow him to break his neurotic serfdom.

However, this cannot be done if the preaching involved dwells on overstatement and false analogies. In that case the neurotic will only be reenforced in his negative self-judgment. The preaching of false guilts which stem from condemnatory and noralistic preaching can only be of benefit to a masochist or a self-righteous Pharisee; both of these individuals represent the most difficult problems for preaching and psychotherapy.

False guilt is usually generated by identifying some aspect of common human existence with sin. David Roberts has correctly observed that,

Man is a finite creature who must struggle to maintain his own existence; therefore, a measure of "self-interest" is healthy and blameless. The will to live, creative expression of individuality, special devotion to family, friends, vocation, and nation—all these are appropriate to man's situation, and likened to his God-given endowments. To say that pursuit of them must inevitably spring from a sinful center seems tantamount to a repudiation of human nature as such.

It seems like condemning man, not merely for being illegitimately selfish and aggressive, but for being human at all.¹

This kind of condemnation naturally is self-destructive and not creative. Preaching which indulges in this kind of moralistic judgment only adds to the general confusion and does nothing to solve the problem.

We have often observed in teaching homiletics that there is a direct connection between the personality of the preacher and his preaching of judgment. This observation has been further confirmed through this study. Moralistic preaching is not based on the nature of the Gospel-Christ did not do it but rather condemned it. Yet it is often heard, although not as much from the men whom we studied. The answer as to why this preaching exists seems to be in the nature of the preaching situation, that is, the expectations of the people who find some enjoyment out of suffering and in the personality structure of the minister. After Barnes had thoroughly studied this problem, he concluded:

As a result of this study there can be increased understanding for the seminary of the way in which preaching is involved with the personality of the minister at levels far deeper than the words utilized in preaching. It is to be understood as a background for the acceptance and training of preachers, that the nature in which a man handles his interpersonal con-

¹David Roberts, Psychotherapy and a Christian View of Man (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1950), pp. 111-12.

flicts and his interpersonal relationships influences his effectiveness as a preacher and his effectiveness subsequently in the entire pastoral task.²

The conclusion to this kind of observation is that it is often difficult to distinguish between the moralistic preaching of a frustrated preacher and the real interpretation of the Gospel. However, one thing we are saying is that the Gospel always includes the element of forgiveness and reconciliation and as such is creative and constructive. Moralistic preaching stimulates what we have called false guilt and usually leaves a person with a feeling of helplessness about resolving the problem.

All of this, of course, is based on the concept that a man who does not accept responsibility or feel any sense of guilt is sick and, therefore, needs help. This sickness in religion is as severe as a psychopath's sickness in counseling, and is as difficult to resolve. To help an insensitive man "feel" and accept his "beingness" is as creative and saving a work as helping a person with an inadequate personality and feelings of worthlessness to learn to accept love and freedom. This is what is involved when preaching attempts to help man experience his "finiteness". This experience is the preparation for religious and psychological salvation.

Charles Barnes, "Some Aspects of Guilt Related to the Preaching of Protestant Ministers" (Unpublished dissertation Ph.D., Boston University School of Theology, 1962), p. 115.

One concept which has often been repeated in this study is that preaching is based on the assumption of a moral order. This observation is part of the involvement of faith in the Christian Gospel and the way of life proposed therein. The content of this moral order is the object of investigation for all theologians and those involved in communicating the concept of God to men. However, it is often assumed that the preacher has this commitment to "Morality" or "truth" while the counselor or psychologist is "objective" and without moral evaluations.

This current study has demonstrated that a "moral" order begins in infancy and that the punitive superego of a child is stronger and more restrictive than any moral legislation or religion. It is also impossible for a psychologist to remain completely objective in his relationship with his client in terms of morality. He may not "judge" the client, but he cannot avoid expressing approval or pleasure as well as feelings of disappointment or discouragement. Menninger spoke for psychologists in general when he said,

We cannot ignore the fact that what the psychoanalyst believes, what he lives for, what he loves, what he considers to be the purpose of life and the joy of life, what he considers to be good and what he considers to be evil, become known to the patient and influence him enormously. . . No matter how skillfull the analyst is in certain technical maneuvers,

his ultimate product, like Galatea, will reflect not only his handicraft but his character.³

In the same general line of reasoning, Outler suggests that the Christian ask the psychotherapist to explore further the assumptions of their analysis of the moral life. He feels that they must either buttress and make explicit their naturalistic religion and their humanistic ethic, by frank appeals to the grounds of their basic faith and tested religious knowledge; or else they must be willing to consider the real option of the Christian message as an ample context for all the positive values of the psychological ethic and the valid extension of the human quest for good "which must fail unless it finds the grace of God as the seeking love which leads all human quest to its goal."⁴

A further observation which comes from this study is that the problem of guilt is so complex that neither preaching or psychotherapy alone has all the answers. The limitations of psychotherapy are recognized and the possibility of preaching ever reaching the unconscious foundations of guilt is very remote. However, each discipline can and must deal with this problem. The resolution is not to

³Karl A. Menninger, "The Character of the Therapist," Pastoral Psychology, IX (November 1958), 14.

⁴Alber Outler, Psychotherapy and the Christian Message (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1954), pp. 239-40.

choose up sides but to recognize the objects and limitations of both disciplines. But before this happens, each side must take a good look at the best that is being done in that particular discipline and stop attacking phone caricatures.

One of the results of these false attacks is that the people who need help are often left in bewilderment. Tournier has observed that his medical patients confess to him their deepest conflicts and anxieties in hope of receiving more than his medical attention but a "beam of divine grace which alone can efface guilt." He asks his Christian medical colleagues to become collaborators with the Church and not competitors. He says they must realize that they do not offer the rites of the church, but they can practice a kind of spiritual ministry.

The problem is that the doctor is embarrassed at this intermediary function for which he has not been trained and the clergyman is likewise anxious about not exceeding the limits of his role by playing doctor or psychologist. Consequently, Tournier says, "A common sphere, like that of guilt, which belongs at one and the same time to psychology and to religion, resembles in some ways a

no-man's-land, an evacuated zone respected by both camps so as to avoid entering into conflict."⁵

As a result of research for this paper, we have concluded that just as the psychologists have often judged all preaching as if it supported a false, guilt producing, moralistic ethic, so, many preachers have been evaluating counseling as if it were all based on the principles of client-centered, non-directive, insight-oriented therapy. This latter approach to counseling through the writings of Carl Rogers has become so popular in many circles that anything which looks like authoritarianism, probing, evaluating, or judging has been probed and authoritatively judged as bad. Since a great deal of preaching in the New Testament has to do with such concepts as strengthening, exhorting, comforting, and instructing, it has appeared impossible on the surface to reconcile these two necessary functions of the ministry.

However, we believe the recent studies in ego psychology may give us some help in understanding and resolving this dilemma. Ego psychology recognizes that the ego is more than a pawn being used at the discretion of the id or superego. It sees the ego as having a certain amount of autonomy and developing along with the id from the same

⁵Paul Tournier, Guilt and Grace (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1962), p. 208.

psychic resources of the organism. It also recognizes that the ego has great adaptive powers and is able to construct defences which allow it to cope with problems of everyday life.⁶

In recent studies, the application of the principles of ego psychology to the counseling process have been explored. It has been discovered that ego psychology can help in determining the "ego strength" of a counselee and on the basis of this observation determine the best approach to use in helping the client with his difficulty. A person with a low degree of ego strength, such as alcoholics, borderline psychotics, some older people, and chronic delinquents plus others who have great difficulty in handling the everyday problems and frustrations of life, may benefit more from a kind of ego supportive counseling than they could from an insight-oriented approach.

It has been suggested that a pastoral counselor might utilize four types of supportive counseling:

- (1) Crisis-An example of this is a pastor's role in bereavement.
- (2) Stop-gap-As Hiltner suggests, supportive counselling can be used with a person until other help is available--for instance, supporting a person until a psychiatric referral can be made.
- (3) Sustaining-In some cases, particularly senior

⁶The two best contemporary works in this subject are Anna Freud, The Ego and the Mechanisms of Defense (New York: International Universities Press, 1964), and Heinz Hartmann, Essays on Ego Psychology (New York: International Universities Press, 1964).

citizens, a continuing supportive relationship with the pastor sustains the person, without any expectation of growth. (4) Growth-Some supportive counseling produces growth in the person's ability to handle life more constructively.⁷

Some of the important functions of ego psychology are also the functions of healthy preaching. It is recognized that the messages in the New Testament vary from admonition and comfort to warning and praise. Some of the parables of Christ are insight oriented while others are ego supporting. Recognizing the varied needs of man, the ministry of Christ is both confronting and demanding as well as supportive and permissive.

However, we believe a further observation needs to be made. The preaching of ideals and the establishment of moral standards likewise have an important function which can be understood within the framework of ego psychology. Someone with a weak ego structure may be afraid that he lacks the strength to ward off the id impulses. A positive ideal that is backed by genuine concern can reinforce the ego and allay the anxiety. Along this same line, the positive proclamation with authority can reinforce a personal commitment which has begun to waver due to social pressure or other outside forces.

This same approach is true for the person who has been overwhelmed by a punitive, negative conscience. The

⁷Howard Clinebell, "Ego Psychology and Pastoral Counseling, Pastoral Psychology, XIV (February 1963), 35.

positive and affirmative declaration of God's love and forgiveness may help this type of individual to trust in this concept, where alone he would be left to doubt. Preaching is also able to help a person with a weak ego structure to visualize the possibility of ego involvement in something outside of the self which is strong enough to motivate the ego to positive ideals which are reasonable and productive. This will likewise alleviate the fear of meaninglessness and despair.

What we have been trying to say is that the positive claims and judgments of the New Testament have great therapeutic value which is in keeping with the principles of ego psychology. Any guilt which is stimulated through this approach becomes the kind that is creative and productive. It is also true that no one is so strong that he does not at times need the kind of supportive growth approach to preaching, but it must be said that it has nothing to do with the pollyanna, Norman Vincent Peale emphasis on positive thinking. This kind of preaching is just the opposite, it faces the problems and claims of life squarely, but it also offers the ego supportive resources of the Gospel which helps an individual live with and make productive his human anxieties and guilt feelings.

This kind of preaching may stimulate healthy guilt feelings, as well as provide within the framework of acceptance and reconciliation a place for man to experience

his own finiteness and surrender his infantile and grandiose claims on life. Just as we have previously discussed the analogy of the needs of the alcoholic to the general existential needs of man, so this emphasis in preaching helps a man to hit bottom, discover a genuine sense of humility, accept his own surrender and experience the reduction of his false ego concepts. The kind of atmosphere created through this approach is like that of Alcoholics Anonymous which has become "a superb example of the way in which the autonomous, adaptive functions of the ego will begin to operate if the person stays within a supportive relationship."⁸

In summary, there is no place anywhere for moralistic preaching which stimulates unhealthy guilt and reinforces superego restrictions. However, there is a place for the preaching of the Gospel and all that it entails. This place can be supported not only by a theological rationale, but I believe may be likewise supported by the best we know in therapeutic counseling.

Although we hope that many of the questions which have arisen in regard to the meaning of guilt in preaching have found some suggested answers, we realize that any one area of inquiry could receive a more thorough treatment.

⁸Ibid., p. 33.

We are particularly interested in continuing to work with seminary students in homiletics classes in determining how their personalities affect their preaching. At present we believe we are attempting some kind of resolution to this problem through the use of small groups for self insight as well as sermon evaluation. Nevertheless, in whatever direction further investigation may go, we feel it must deal openly and honestly with the healing functions of psychology and theology, of counseling and preaching.

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